

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST 2300 AD

An Opera Singer and a Professional Killer. Could love keep them together?

CAIN BERLINGER

COMPLETE DIGITAL EDITION

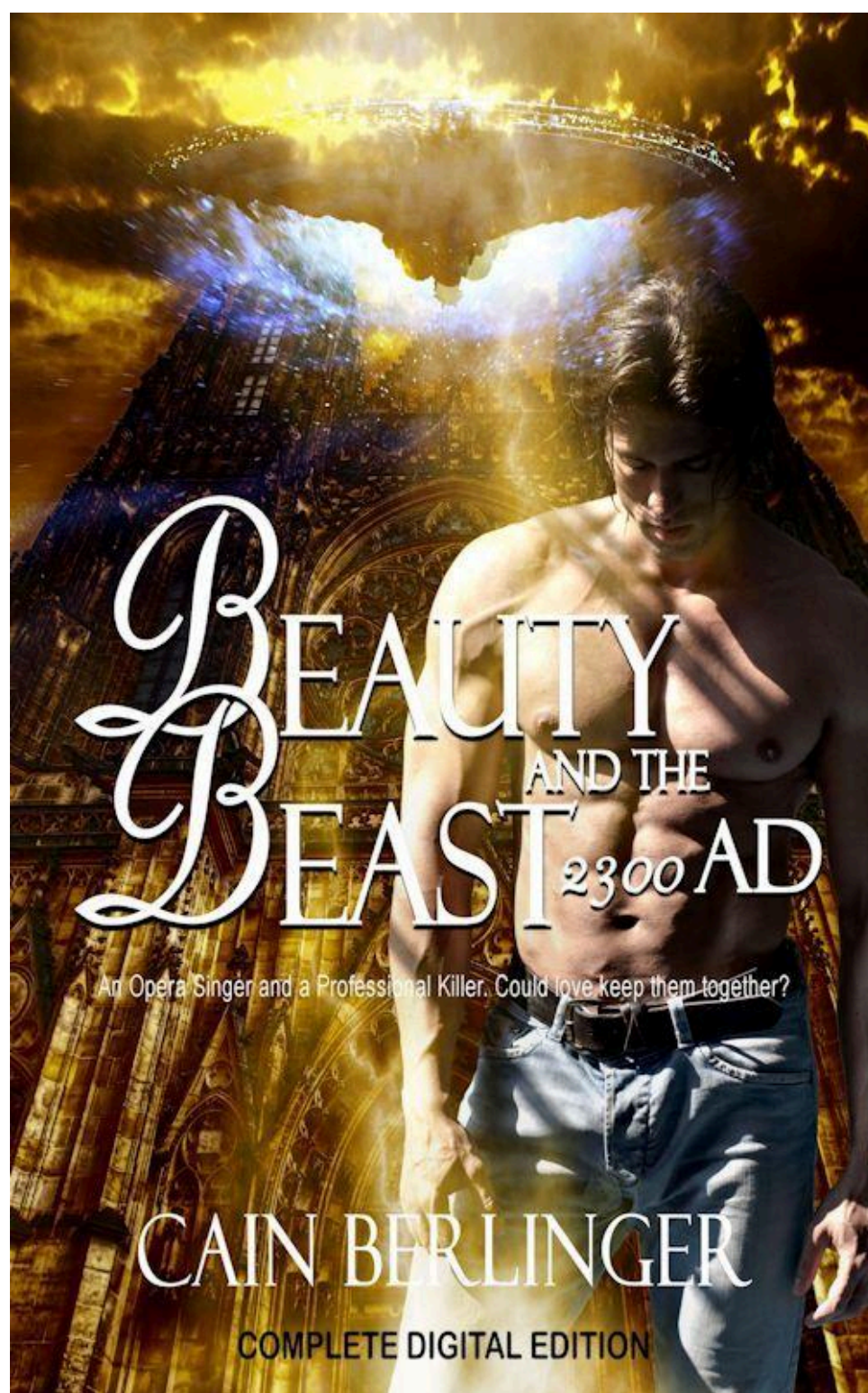


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Cain Berlinger

*An Opera Singer and a Professional Killer. Could love keep them
together?*

Lydian Press

NESSUN DORMA

Dr. Quentin Sarasota created monsters. In a near perfect world so far removed from so many nihilistic predictions of the past, Dr. Quentin Sarasota, invented Creatine 170, a formula when fed to men released massive doses of testosterone into their bodies. For men who already had an aggressive streak the overdose would create deadly repercussions. Of course no one in civilized society denied their right to exist and that truly it was any man's right to ingest the formula which, when taken filled a much needed void in the human psyche. Which will be made clearer as this story progresses. None the less, it was universally agreed that Creatine 170 created monsters, and good ones to, if total barbarians was your measure. Although you need to know the circumstances that made Creatine 170 both a savior and destroyer of humanity at the same time.

It took four hundred years for Earth to round up all the gun runners, mercenaries and war lords with the help of every clandestine organization from the CIA to the Homeland Security of Internationals, HSI. Governments were finally able to track down the scoundrels, the war profiteers, and then very publicly arrange for these brokers of death and destruction to 'disappear'.

There were newscasts sent around the world from television monitors to the Internet, all broadcasting raids on camps ad compounds and even politically placed palaces, where well cloaked 'respectable' men were either 'accidentally' blown up, or shot 'resisting' arrest. Sometimes the person in question was shot as he reached for a weapon, allegedly. In the cases of some, martyrdom was avoided by either burying them at sea, or turning them into ashes. There were never any bodies to claim, by governments or family.

And then one day, all wars and gun violence just...stopped. One would have expected a gradual decline but the message had been sent out loud and clear and after several 'vanishings' war lords realized they could no longer hide behind, or manipulate the law or even count upon wealthy benefactors, or fanatical followers. The government agencies had decided to fight fire with fire and as a result, gun violence no longer existed. Even the gang leaders on neighborhood streets were treated as any warlord or gun runner, money, power and influence were no longer a viable currency. The few left who traded in death had either disappeared or gone deep underground where they could never be found.

Mercenaries who till now had fueled wars, now found themselves embroiled in one of their own, and they were rapidly losing.

All the money flooding into government coffers that previously went to weapons production and distribution, began to filter into areas of education, art, science, math, mass production of healthy food stuffs and medicines. Third world countries were neutralized, fed and made more desirable places on the planet. The world had truly entered a golden age.

As the world became more cerebral, the merging of borders over one hundred years had made xenophobia a memory. National pride was no longer an issue to rally around. Competitive sports were waning, and that is where the golden era began to tarnish.

Confrontations were fought in boardrooms, panels and open forums. Golden age civilization forced the natural bloodlust of man to simmer just beneath the surface. Humankind was not prepared for a world that provided no outlets to vent, to get angry or to get emotionally aggressive. In the privacy of their bedrooms, people became more aggressive and more brutal in their love making. Love had taken on a more defiant tone and subs were extremely submissive and their Dominants became even more dominant. Sex toys enjoyed a boom in creativity and sales.

Engineering miracles were happening virtually every day, even the long awaited 'flying cars' made their appearance, cutting down somewhat on rush hour congestion. Eliminating this major life obstacle however, did little to 'calm' the cauldron of bubbling need to be angry.

Public displays of sexuality became common occurrence. Gradually it dawned on everyone that they needed something less genteel than polite sportsmanship with all its rules and regulations. Many people began to take up arms for no reason other than to 'get it out of their system'. Random violence began to appear around the world and those in power realized that the world could shortly return to an even more illogical madness than before, it had to be stopped, curtailed.

It was around this time that Dr. Sarasota created Creatine 170.

Despite the lack of firepower in a near utopian society, what were crimes in the past were still crimes in the present. Murder was still committed only no longer by guns but by any other means necessary. Dr. Sarasota convinced the world that it would be better served if criminals were used for more than simply serving their time and costing the state. What's more they presented a solution to the growing madness of aggression.

Unlike the gentlemen's boxing sport, street fighting had few rules, it was raw violence fought by men who trained hard and long. Creatine 170 was initially an enhancing steroid that made men stronger in every way. In a very short time a 90 pound weakling could be transformed into a 250 pound mass of rippling muscle. The side effect was that testosterone was produced at insanely high levels making the aggression making such a man into a dangerous beast, an uncontrollable machine who could and would kill on command, thus creating a monster. A few hundred years prior, street fighting had become a popular sport among the lower classes and professionals, it had never went away, but thanks to Dr. Sarasota's formula it was back in a big way.

Criminals who wished to petition for an early release from prison, no matter how serious the crime, could volunteer for 'the program'. 'The program' as it was known, consisted of any free citizen who wished to do so, could 'purchase' a prisoner willing to take Creatine 170. These men would get in the gated ring and fight each other. The citizen could release all his anger and aggression through the surrogate prisoner. In this way the prisoner could gain his freedom, should he fight on successfully to a set number of matches. No one knew of any prisoner who had actually

obtained his freedom. He was either killed in the ring or allegedly given a new identity and his freedom. So the public was told.

Because often there were fewer available prisoners than free citizens, many of the prisoners had several 'owners'. The Creatine 170 continued to create bigger more violent street fighters. The demand was great.

Troy Akiru had been a promising cellist in his earlier life. He was small boned and quiet and kept basically to himself. His parents sacrificed greatly to pay for his lessons never letting him forget the high expectations they had for their only son. Asians were known for the pressure they put on their offspring and Troy's parents were no different. From an early age his parents reminded him of his humble Chinese background and that his mission in life would be to become rich and famous and lift them out of their lower middle class surroundings.

In his sophomore year of college, losing the Salzburg School of Music scholarship to fellow cellist Joel Lineman was a devastating blow to him but even more to his parents. It was only one opportunity lost but his parents made it seem like the end of the world. So It was an unfortunate move on Joel's part to taunt the diminutive Asian as they sat together in the rehearsal hall just the two of them, their bows flying. Anger swelled up in Troy as Joel made little deriding remarks until Troy leaped out of his seat he reached over and snatched Joel's expensive antique Tourte bow from his hands and rammed it into Joel's neck. He watched impassively as Joel lay on the floor twitching and trying with his hands to stop the flow of blood that gushed from his neck.

Stavros Constantin was one of the world's foremost tenors, renowned beyond the world of Opera. His renditions of popular songs made him a contemporary favorite and his legions of fans crossed all class and culture lines. It was this same celebrity status which made ordinary fans feel close to him, as if they knew him. He was personable and agreeable and even his legendary diva status was looked on as a quirk of a great talent. Constantin headed numerous charities that helped artists around the world seek their true potential. Not everyone received the diva's blessings though.

Jonathan Sullivan was one such musician, one who had applied and failed. In his youth he had tried singing but found he had no ear for harmony; all his efforts were met by his many teachers as ‘pitchy’ ‘out of tune’ ‘all over the place’. He finally admitted defeat, deciding that singing was not for him. At the age of 16 he threw in the towel realizing that there were other facets of the musical world which would appreciate his many other talents, he just had to find out what they were. He became over the years a self-taught musician who played most instruments poorly, only the organ seemed to bring out his natural melancholy state. Its haunting chords and fine tone was very like a fine pedal diapason combined with a soft 16-foot reed of equal quality and intonation and its versatility touched him deeply and once he realized that a match had been made he was happy. He was content, until he heard Stavros Constantin sing “Che Gelida Manina” from Act 1 of Puccini’s La Boheme.

Jonathan had played organ in the opera House for many years but he never appreciated it or its performers as he had Stavros’ voice that first night of rehearsal. He felt a stirring in himself that he had never experienced before and he wasn’t sure if it was the singular quality of the music, Constantin’s voice, or the beauty of the Greek opera star himself. But he was sure the combination had stolen his heart. He decided he had to be a part of it, this world that Stavros inhabited. As soon as he could, he downloaded La Boheme and played it over and over. Yes the music was nice but not as nice as when Stavros sang it. He felt the star was singing to him, personally. The only way he could be sure was to write an opera himself which he immediately set out to do.

Troy consented to the Creatine 170 because there was no life in prison that he aimed to get used to. He was picked on because of his size and mistreated by the guards because of his death row status. When the warden’s people came to him with Creatine 170 he immediately jumped at the chance. In no time he had become the monster anticipated and the glories of his former life as a musician were lost in the murderous muscle he had packed on to defeat and even kill the opponents he was pitted against.

He was a juggernaut of a man, like his opponents but his Asian background had given him a limited but powerful arsenal of moves which he used to his advantage. He rapidly acquired many owners as well as many fans. He had obtained the super stardom which had eluded him as a cellist he now reveled in as a monstrous fighter. The bigger and more successful the fighter the more perks he was entitled to one of which was picking his own arenas to fight in. Often the arenas were caged events with many guards posted to deter any thoughts of escape.

Troy always chose these venues because they felt less like a prison and more like the coliseums of the old Roman days. He could close his eyes and picture himself as a gladiator. He could also pick the music of his choice. Most of the gladiators chose pounding rock beats as they bloodied their opponents. Coming from a classical background Troy always chose the classics in which the beating of his opponents often played out like musical interludes. As he swung his bloody fists into their faces the music would swell and the orchestra would climb as he delivered a usually final bloody blow. It was artistry.

“How the hell did you get into my dressing room?” Stavros was furious, his bodyguards were nowhere in sight and this man was waving a libretto at him as if it were a pistol.

“Please Mr. Constantin. I mean no disrespect. When I first heard you sing here a year ago, I never dreamed you’d be back within the year. You have made me appreciate the Opera so much.” Jonathan had worked long and hard, day and night to finish his opera. He had followed Stavros Constantin’s schedule religiously, timing the completion of his opera with Stavros’ return. “My name is Jonathan Sullivan I auditioned for you many years ago. You said I should give up trying to be a singer.” Jonathan was still a little crushed by the memory but it made him even more determined.

“Then you followed my advice. I am never wrong in these matters.” Stavros sniffed.

“I became an organist. I play here and other places. I was here the night you first sang the aria from La Boheme.”

“Hmmm yes, beautiful opera. I must say I did it justice. But that does not explain why you are in my dressing room. That so-called bodyguard will surely lose his job!” Stavros looked around nervously, he didn’t like being alone with his ‘public’. This Jonathan man seemed obsessed.

“This,” Jonathan shoved the opera into Stavros’ hands “I wrote this. It’s a little rough but it’s good and sincere and I believe that...well, it is my love offering to you!”

Stavros looked at it and calmly placed it down on his vanity table. “How very sweet, you can go now and I will get back to you...uh...Marvin...” Stavros turned his back to Jonathan.

“It’s Jonathan and I would like very much if you read it now...”

Stavros cursed the absent body guard. “Now? I have to rehearse for my upcoming performance I will read it later.” Stavros attempted to walk around Jonathan who stood in his way.

“No. You won’t blow me off again. Please.... read...it...now...”

Stavros saw the demented gleam in Jonathan’s eyes and he was suddenly afraid. “Let me put on some music then. So that I may rehearse while I read.” Stavros put on ‘Othello’ hoping that music would indeed calm the savage beast. He sat down skimmed a little and pretended to read the opera. To Stavros presentation was indeed everything and this ‘opera’ had been poorly presented.

After 20 minutes Stavros sighed and put down the opus. “I’m sorry, I can’t possibly sing this. The role is written for someone with a voice too low for me. I can’t possibly feel comfortable or secure singing it. The story is too heavy in Act one, too light in Act 2 and the voices won’t mesh. It’s very good for a first effort. And the third act has too many voices to make the scene plausible Do some more work on it and come back in a year’s time. I will consider it then....” And most likely have a more career oriented body guard then. “Here you are and thank you for this. Here let me give you an autographed photo of me. I’ll inscribe it personally.... To Malcolm, all my best Stavros.”

As Stavros handed Jonathan the photograph on top of the opera, Jonathan grasped his hand while the other hand went to his throat. He began

gasping for air and he leaned on the back of the vanity chair hyperventilating.

“You...You...supercilious, self-serving...smug... bastard! How dare you!! How dare you dismiss me like this! I don’t want your fucking picture! MY apartment is papered with pictures of YOU. You were my hero, your voice, your beauty all a fucking fraud!” Jonathan was quick and side stepped Stavros’ attempted exit from the dressing room. His hands quickly reclaimed the diva’s throat and he banged Stavros’ head against the wall.

Stavros fell to the floor, weak and almost consciousness and he struggled to get to his feet and regain breathing again. Doing both seemed too much of a challenge as Jonathan came behind him and hit him hard on the head with his fists.

“Bastard!”

Stavros collapsed onto the floor as Jonathan moved quickly to unfasten Stavros’ pants and slide them down around his ankles. He then removed his own belt and raised it above his head. “You need a good ass thrashing Mr big fat opera star!” Jonathan brought the heavy leather belt down hard on Stavros’ beautifully tight, furred butt-cheeks repeatedly until they glowed bright pink, nearly reddish orange as the blood rushed to the surface of his pale white skin. Sweat poured down Jonathan’s face as he exhausted himself beating Stavros’ butt cheeks, quivering ever so slightly with each stroke of the leather belt which had been fashioned around Jonathan’s fist as a strap. Stavros’ was clearly unconscious, oblivious to the savage beating his butt was enduring.

Jonathan stopped to wipe the sweat from his face. He leaned over Stavros’ body his hands caressing him, and placed his face in front of him. The opera star was not dead, merely exhausted. Jonathan sighed with relief. His anger had gotten the better of him. His belt already removed, he lowered his pants and was surprised at how hard his cock had become. Pre cum dripped from him like a clear stream and he rubbed his hands across Stavros’ plump reddened butt cheeks and his cock got even harder. He spit into his hand and rubbed the spittle over his engorged cock.

“Don’t do my opera my big shot star. I’ll do your ass instead!” with those words he plunged deep into Stavros’ butthole, the savage brutality of

it designed to stay with the singer for a long time.

Jonathan repeated his assault until he exploded inside the opera singer his load spilling out over the girth of his cock. When Jonathan was finished he stood up and staggered back against the wall, stunned, shamed and surprised by what he had done. How was he ever going to make it up to his idol? He grabbed his opera, disappeared from the dressing room and stopped to gather his things as he left the theatre with the aria from Othello ringing in his ears.

“I can’t tell you how sorry we are this happened Mr. Constantin. This has never happened in our theatre. Ever!” Saul Bellows, the owner of the theatre had provided the security guards for Stavros, who had let his own guards go because he had been assured utmost security. But security was designed to keep autograph seekers from bothering him, not crazed lunatics who had assaulted him in the most brutal way. Stavros’ agent suggested suing the theatre.

Unfortunately the music from Jonathan’s opera stayed in his head. He had read enough of it to know that his criticisms had been genuine but still there was certain haunting melody to it. Problem was, whenever he thought of the music he thought of the composer and the thought of the composer brought back some very unpleasant memories that were only a day or so old. Still he hoped never to see Jonathan again, although the man had been strikingly handsome, what he did was wrong and Stavros intended to see that one day Jonathan would be behind bars, opera composer or not.

Another year passed and Stavros had no luck in finding Jonathan; it seemed as if the man had dropped off the face of the earth. He wasn’t sure that Jonathan was even alive as he had made no further attempt to reach him.

His agent assured him that the man had probably been emotionally crushed and either killed himself or gone on to harass someone else. “I wouldn’t give him another thought Stavros. Focus on your work, your singing, your voice. Leave the loonies to me!”

Jack Rider had been Stavros' agent for many years, and trusted with everything especially his bookings. Since the Jonathan incident, Stavros' dates were kept pretty much low key.

"Tonight it seems I am singing for charity. I do enough for charity Jack, why do you book me into these things?" Stavros studied the program, it was simple enough, one aria, a few autographs and gone.

"Special night my friend. The street fighter event is a big one. Lots of tense folks around here needing to vent. One of the prize super stars is fighting tonight. Troy Akiru is a major deal, kills almost everybody, maims the rest." Jack was enthusiastic.

Stavros made a disgusted face. "Charming. And uh where do I come in?" Stavros never needed the fights, he was even tempered and all his emotions went into his music.

"Troy really packs em in house. He's one of those privileged Creatine 170 guys that gets special treatment. They feel if they treat em nice they won't try and run and end up getting killed or worse yet killing someone else." Jack didn't want to admit that there was always gambling going on as well. Jack did quite a bit of gambling himself, and he'd do anything for money. Filling the arenas with big names was also in his best interest.

"Sounds really....intense....you still haven't told me where I come in." Stavros was curious about why his name had come up.

"Seems Troy was a classical cellist before he killed a guy. Anyway he's retained some of his humanity and he's apparently a fan of yours. So he's requested you sing at his matches tonight. His sponsors are paying us...I mean you a shit load of money to do this. Some of the proceeds will be going to charity. Everybody wins." Jack smiled wishing he had a big cigar to chomp down on, he felt very much the big time agent.

Troy was in a very good killing mood. He felt he had taken on the madness and anger of the world and he was willing to carry the load as long as they kept feeding him warriors willing to die for the cause. He struggled to retain some of his humanity. As a gay warrior he kept careful to conceal his sexuality but in prison it was a lost cause. Injected with heavy daily dosages of testosterone loaded Creatine 170, every warrior fought to be on

top, and who ever ended up on the bottom did so reluctantly. The sex among the warriors was of course brutally violent and without remorse. There was no kissing, certainly no cuddling just raw passion and nothing that passed for caring, since the man you fucked today would most likely be the man you had to kill the next day.

But Troy fought hard to keep the music in his head, every time he'd miss a tune or a memorable melody he's beat himself in the head until it returned. Other warriors assumed he was crazy and stayed away from him for the most part. He struggled to recall the classics and the operas and all that he had lost in that one moment of insanity. He would let Creatine 170 take his body but he would fight and fight hard to retain his music and that's where Stavros Constantin came in.

When he first came to prison he was assigned floor washing duties which he did without complaint. There were certainly less attractive jobs he could be doing. On the third day of his incarceration he was assigned to the warden's quarters. It was a summer day, the fans were broken and the heat in the prison was inescapable. He began moving furniture around to get into all the corners in the warden's quarters. The warden sat at his desk and watched the little Asian man, barely legal enough to escape the system. The warden was a big, muscular man. There was a rumor that he used small doses of Creatine 170 himself, but little enough to stay normal.

"You're new here aren't you? What's your name? I'm the warden I should know you!" The warden squinted through his glasses, he had a great body but poor eye sight.

"I'm Troy Akiru sir. A lifer." Troy lowered his head. He still found his verdict a harsh judgment, therefore worsening a debilitating situation.

"Hmmmm so you're gonna be here awhile. Its kinda hot why don't you get comfortable.?"

Troy looked at the warden and figured he knew what the deal was. He had heard stories and been warned that his tight, smooth little Asian body was going to be welcome in the system here, as it had always been other places. He stripped to his pants and resumed moping.

"You ain't finished boy. I'm not going to hurt you but you need to do as you're told." The warden sat back in the chair and he stroked his cock

through his pants and licked his lips like a man from a cheap porn movie.

Troy's eyes teared up but he removed his pants and then his shorts until he stood with just his shoes and socks on.

"Now lock the door," the warden said pulling his cock out of his pants. He then reached over and turned on the music.

The music was the voice of Stavros Constantin singing 'Nessun Dorma'. Troy had never heard it sung so beautifully before. It was a voice that would always comfort him, he would hear it in his head whenever something unpleasant was about to happen.

"Come here baby. You have to learn how to make friends."

Troy got to his knees and the warden slid his thick cock as far into Troy's mouth as it would go until the boy choked on it. He quickly jumped back to catch his breath.

"I guess as the years fly by you'll be getting better at this. I did."

Troy was practically a grown man yet he couldn't stop the tears from falling as the warden made use of his throat until he grew tired and reached over Troy's back to play with his virgin buttocks.

"Shhh.. stop that! Now you're a grown man, tears in this prison can get you killed. They don't tolerate weakness so you better toughen up. NOW!" The warden wet his finger and played with Troy's hole while he jacked himself off.

Troy wasn't sure whether it was the music, Stavros' 'Nessun Dorma' or the ridiculous repulsiveness of the situation that caused him to bawl like a baby.

Troy stoically dressed, and continued his task of washing the floor, which included wiping up the puddles of cum that spewed forth from the warden's cock. The warden didn't fuck Troy that day, nor the next, or the day after that. But every day Troy cried as he was forced to swallow the warden's cock and then swallow his load. The day Troy stopped crying was the same day the warden had him reassigned.

The night of the big Street Fight International was a very big deal. Getting a major performer of Stavros' quality was sure to garner huge ratings on the televised and video streamed presentations of tonight's fight. Besides Stavros, the main attraction was the ruthless killer Troy Akiru, who was close to earning his release based on his number of kills. He was the gambling man's odds on favorite.

The huge Solar Dome garnered world renown for its huge super bowl-like presentations. The cage itself was relatively small, in proportion to the massive stage, but the seating was over 50,000 and the event would be viewed by tens of millions of people worldwide. From his dressing room beneath the stage Stavros could hear the roaring of the crowds above him. He was better suited to smaller opera theaters but he appreciated the fact that tonight he would be seen and heard by millions. His ego was satisfied.

Not far from the dressing rooms, were the holding cells of the manacled street fighters who jumped around like caged animals eager to be released and free to vent, to rage to destroy. Excitement was high and both men felt their hearts racing as show time drew near.

Meanwhile.....

"You have the money..."?

"Yes. Here." Money exchanged hands.

"I don't have to count it do I?"

"It's all there. If you don't deliver I'll be back to collect it."

"Don't worry. The doors to the stage and above, will be unlocked."

"...and the guards?"

"Distracted to other parts of the arena."

"No one will see me until I want them to."

"...and no one will stop you."

"I have your word. You'll distract them long enough..."

"...for you to make good your escape."

"...your word..."?

“My word.” The two men shook hands and quickly departed each other’s company. One man’s gambling debts were covered, while the other pursued his dream.

The music swelled, and the crowd roared in anticipation as the lights leaped into performance, flashing, highlighting, coaxing the crowd into a frenzy. All at once the spotlights hit the center stage and the crowd held its collective breath. The hush spread across the arena like an enveloping wave and from the center of the stage the princely figure of Stavros rose up on an elevating platform through the floor. When Stavros opened his mouth to sing, it was as if every other sound in the world ceased to resonate. In this new world everyone and everything stopped for the rare chance to hear the diva live and in person, for Stavros was as beautiful to watch as he was to hear. “Nessun Dorma”: Nobody sleeps. But the world was captivated.

Meanwhile the stage was visible from the holding cells below and Troy’s heart soared, he stood frozen in place. His heart raced and his eyes filled with tears as his favorite aria and his favorite diva met, within grasp, live, real. Every emotion in him stripped bare and those around him had only to see him to know that they had better be silently listening as well.

When the highest note was scored and the aria had ended, the audience went berserk, an explosion could have gone off and it would have been lost in the volume. And as the music finished its turn and Stavros raised his arms to accept homage from his fans the gates around the stage dropped and for a few precious moments he was close to his fans.

In all the madness and frenetic energy, no one paid any immediate attention to Jonathan as he swung from the rafters of the arena and swooped overhead grabbed Stavros in his arms and continued to the edge of the stage and back into the rafters. No one knew whether it was part of the show or what was really happening, which was the very public kidnapping of one of the world’s greatest opera divas! By the time anyone knew what was going on, Jonathan and Stavros had vanished. And Troy had vanished with them.

What happened was.....

As Stavros stood in the spotlight singing Troy had managed to move closer to the edge of the platform/stage to get a better look at Stavros. He did not think he would ever get this close again. As he looked up from

below the stage he could literally see the spit flying from Stavros' mouth. He also saw a web of cables above the diva high overhead. He knew the cage was going to be lowered in only a few moments and that the men who were fighting were surrounded by security. His eyes followed the cables out of the arena and as Stavros hit those final notes to an aria Troy knew by heart, he looked up and saw Stavros as he was quickly lifted from the stage and being carried away.

"Noooooooooooo!" Troy cried and quickly he leaped up onto the platform and raised his manacled hands as he jumped in time to grab onto Stavros' boots.

Despite the added weight Jonathan managed to carry Troy along with Stavros out of the arena amidst a still cheering crowd who weren't quite sure what just happened.

Troy had leaped up and over the gun carrying guards and onto the platform through the opening in the stage. Everything had happened so fast the guards were too slow to react. The crowd went even wild when they saw their favorite street fighter carried out of the arena hanging onto the boots of their favorite opera star.

When Jonathan landed onto the adjoining building he kicked at Troy repeatedly until the bigger man let go of Stavros' boots. As Troy finally released his grasp, he fell onto the floor, his hands still manacled. Jonathan grabbed Stavros in his arms and took off over the rooftops headed toward the direction of the old opera house. Stavros struggled to escape but his small body was no match for the bigger and stronger Jonathan who had passion and insanity on his side. Jonathan dragged Stavros into the opera house via the roof and climbed through its broken windows. Once inside he followed the stairs all the way down into the cellar below where he had set up an elaborate grotto with a cheap replica of the stage above.

Stavros was still in shock and out of breath, his hair damp as it clung to his forehead. Tossed to the floor, he demanded, "Are you mad? What the hell is wrong with you?" Stavros began pulling off his costume, the heat was overwhelming him.

"Diva to the end, aren't you? You were magnificent tonight. I never wanted you more. But for over a year you have ignored my calls, my e-

mails. Any attempts to reach you were rebuffed. What was I to do? You made me do this! You! Tonight you will sing my opera even if it's for me only. But first..." Jonathan began to remove his own elaborate costume, which he had donned for the occasion.

When Stavros saw him remove his belt, the memories came back and he stopped pulling his clothes off. "No. Not again." Stavros attempted to stand but his knees were weak and he was afraid.

"Yes. Again." Jonathan tore his belt off and dropped to one knee, the leather wrapped around his fist. He reached over and with his free hand he brushed Stavros cheek. Stavros cringed and he closed his eyes. "You are so beautiful and so talented. The voice of a true diva."

"Please, if you are so enamored of me why are you doing this?" Stavros didn't resist as Jonathan helped him to remove the part of his costume which was his pants. Jonathan's instructions were silent ones but were well understood by the normally docile and passive Stavros Constantin.

The great singer lay on his stomach and clenched his fist as Jonathan rained down blow after blow of his leather belt, much as he had done before. Stavros' snow white buttocks glowed a bright red and the welts formed slowly. Jonathan knew the discoloration would soon follow and his cock hardened, its vein plumped up. Jonathan tossed his belt aside and reached downward spreading the opera singer's grimly beaten butt-cheeks apart. He let the saliva fall slowly from his mouth and onto Stavros furry buttock, then immediately caught the spittle alongside the head of his cock and guided it hard deep and quickly in. Stavros screamed once then relaxed into the painful assault once again.

As Jonathan raced toward an explosive climax he suddenly felt a vice-like grip on the back of his neck. Troy's hands were still cuffed as he lifted Jonathan off of Stavros and flung him to the other side of the room.

"What the fuck?!" Jonathan shouted and then suddenly he was afraid as he got a good look at his assailant. He thought he would run but Troy was on top of him in seconds pummeling Jonathan's face harder with each blow. Jonathan struggled to get from beneath Troy but with little success.

Jonathan managed to turn onto his stomach and attempted to crawl away from beneath Troy. But he was no match for the muscled street fighter. A man who tore off men's heads to survive.

Ha ha.

"Oh yeah mister I know exactly what I am!" Troy had already yanked Jonathan's pants down from around his waist just enough for him to begin wedging his cock between Jonathan's butt cheeks and force his way into one very tight hole. Jonathan screamed, cried and never relaxed into the pummeling as all of his other victims had done in the past. Troy leaned in hard and deep, resting his handcuffed fists onto Jonathan's back to support himself as he violently thrust himself into Jonathan's tight lil' man pussy. Troy waited a few minutes after his own orgasm before he pulled his long thick and slightly bloodied cock. out of Jonathan, Up until that night, Jonathan's own ass had been virginal.

"What goes around comes around." Troy stood up and with both hands tucked his cock away. He towered above both men. Jonathan at his feet his body shaking as he cried over what he perceived as his loss of control, his power, his manhood. "What a fine bitch you are...and now I'm going to tear you apart!"

Troy picked Jonathan up from the floor and was about to finish him off when Stavros cried out. "No don't!!"

Troy dropped Jonathan to the floor and turned toward Stavros huddled in the corner of the room. He sat with his arms wrapped around his knees, cowering and fearful of what he had seen, and what might have followed had he not cried out. He shuddered as Troy turned and walked toward him.

Once in his presence, Troy bent down on one knee, his wrists still cuffed. He turned his head in different directions and studied Stavros as an animal would a strangeness, as if he was seeing Stavros for the first time.

Stavros looked him in the eyes and he muttered. "You...you're no better than him. You are a beast, a monster."

And then Troy did a strange thing. He dropped his face into his hands and began to cry.

Troy's face was wet with tears. "I'm a monster yes, I fight for my freedom. But...he ...that over there is the real monster." Troy nodded toward Jonathan. "For many years I have called upon you, your voice to bring me peace in my violent world. It makes me mad and sad at the same time that he dragged you into this. That he...hurt... you...is...is ...unacceptable."

The two men looked at one another for several minutes. It was now Stavros' turn to see Troy, as if for the first time. The only sound came from Jonathan who had curled up into a fetal position; his sobs were mere whimpers now.

Troy held out his cuffed wrists to Stavros.

"You know they will hunt you down. Even if I say you rescued me from...him." Stavros said in his lowest voice.

"Maybe. Because of you I spared his life. I'm already a lifer, one more kill would not have mattered either way." Troy reached up and placed his hands on Stavros' face. His tenderness belied his harsh words. "You are so beautiful. Only a monster could ever hurt someone like you. A natural monster not a Creatine freak like me." Troy dropped his hands to the floor while Stavros reached out and softly brushed the fighter's tears away.

"You...you're trembling." Troy reached for Stavros.

"Please, can you hold me?"

Stavros moved close to Troy who raised his arms and let his cuffed wrists trap Stavros in an embrace he could not easily escape. Stavros shivered as if he were cold, but he had never felt warmer and more protected. Troy wrapped himself around the small opera singer. He had never been touched like this before. Being held by a man who didn't fear him or want anything from him except to be held and possibly loved, was a new experience for Troy.

"We could find a way to remove these shackles and then...then I'll hide you." Stavros' cock was hard but more importantly, his heart had been engaged.

"I'd have to kill....him..." Troy motioned toward Jonathan who had seemed to have lost all reason as he lay fetal. "He'd tell the police that you are hiding me. They'd come for both of us." Troy leaned into Stavros body,

he rested his head against him, smelling his hair, his skin, wanting himhe wanted to take him as he had Jonathan. But for the first time in his life he cared about the other man.

Stavros leaned his head against Troy's chest. The fighter was massive but Stavros felt safe with the man he had already come to recognize as a killer, but one with heart and compassion. Unheard of in a man of Troy's caliber. "Then we don't have a lot of time." Stavros whispered.

Stavros reached inside Troy's pants. "Jesus. I don't even know your name." he said as he cradled Troy's cock in his hand.

"Troy. My name is Troy," he whispered as Stavros turned away from the muscled killer, Troy's manacled hands pressed flat against Stavros' stomach.

"You rescued me. It's the one way I can repay you. Please. And Troy...?"

"Yes?"

"Fuck me hard, I've often wondered what a Creatine 170 fuck would be like. Satisfy my curiosity...satisfy it so much I don't ever want to forget it or... have it again. Do you understand me and what I am saying?"

He didn't see Troy nodding his head in the affirmative, but he felt it, hard against his backside. At the first thrust of his cock, Stavros knew that Troy knew exactly what he had meant. Troy might be a killer many times over, but he was also a man of his word.

Meanwhile a relieved Jonathan gathered up the notes to his opera and skulked quietly away. He couldn't tell the police anything without implicating himself. "Go ahead lovers. Enjoy yourselves.... for now." And then he disappeared.

PRISON FALCONE

Falcone is the name of the three mile impenetrable prison that hovers 6 miles over Antarctica. The only way on and the only way off the prison island is by plane. It's kept airborne by science, engine boosters and ingenuity. Falcone is a multi factional prison, housing pickpockets and white crime in one section of the prison and the scum killers of the earth, in another section. Their units are separate, keeping the various factions apart to protect the less carnivorous of the human species.

Falcone was more than a prison. It had over the years through generous endowments also become a very high government research lab headed by Dr. Quentin Sarasota, the creator of the Creatine 170 vaccine. The vaccine that turned men into monster killing machines.

Because of the difficulty of getting on and off the island, security was generally just a few soldiers who monitored the machines and the comings and goings of aircraft that brought visitors and dignitaries. Security was kept at a minimum since guns or fire power no longer existed and the prisoners could only escape if they were to sprout wings. The only exception was during public appearances in publicly accessible coliseums where the men would take on the mantle of mankind's need for aggression and drama. The manmade monsters would fight in the arena and eventually kill their opponents.

The combatants were prisoners who in exchange for their eventual freedom or reduced sentence, would gather 'kill' credits and eventually be freed. No one ever escaped during the matches; they were too psyched up, too freshly injected with Creatine 170 to care about anything other than killing their opponent. Nothing was more important. Until an Asian mixed blood street fighter named Troy Akiru escaped to rescue the man he loved

from a mad man. The madman had been overpowered and Stavros Constantin, the world famous opera singer had been saved. During the course of the rescue, the singer and the street fighter fell in love. And now they were both on the run from the authorities.

They had managed to avoid the police in the city. Stavros' souped-up Ferrari was an old fashioned make that still rode the pavements, this way he avoided air traffic and possible air patrol. His attempted kidnapping had been seen worldwide but there was uncertainty as to whether he had been kidnapped by Troy or whether he was instrumental in Troy's escape. He had very little time to think as he sped through the streets and onto the country roads.

He was headed toward the home of the one man he felt he could trust. Fabian Dumont, former conductor for the Metropolitan Opera. Not only did he have a huge estate, and a crush on Stavros, but also an underground parking where Stavros could hide his Ferrari. A quick telephone call to an old friend and the ground opened up before him and closed shut once the Ferrari was safely hidden inside.

Hayden Pettigrew had been warden of Falcone for many years, and every day gave him pure joy. For years Hayden had experienced nothing but elation at Falcone. Everything he could ever need or want could be had on the floating island above the Antarctica. All he had to do was ask. The power that had placed him there were happy as long as Hayden kept the peace. They were none the wiser as to how he kept the peace, just that he kept it and that was what was important. Hayden liked cold weather but he also loved the reassuring sounds of the blast furnaces as that kept the island warm and toasty.

Project: Teardrop was the name of Hayden's prime 'pleasure'. For years he carefully monitored the admissions office watching and waiting for young, new inmates who ended up in the system just barely out of juvenile detention by a few months and now found themselves in the adult facility known as Prison Falcone. It was the system that had placed these boys so easily within Hayden's grasp. Hayden's own spies operated as his eyes and ears, watching for the cutest and the youngest, and the most easily intimidated. He especially liked criers. Terrified, alone and scared, hard

exteriors crumbled and they all eventually cried for their mama. It made Hayden's dick hard just thinking about them. As always he wore his Welcome to Falcone outfit, which consisted of tracking boots, a black t-shirt which fitted over his finely muscled body and a special pair of fatigues.

It was 7pm when the five young men filed past him into his office. Two white, two black and one Asian. Hayden liked this variety as he skimmed their files for the umpteenth time. All were guilty of victimless crimes. The guards knew the drill and waited outside the office. Hayden could handle any problem that might come up, even if all five young men attacked him. Hayden liked a good scuffle. Nuthin' like the combination smell of sweet male pussy and fear right after dinner.

“Ok, bitches. Get them panties off, along with everything else! I want some sweet buns to go with mah evenin' desert. When ya's done strippin', line up here in front of Daddy I wanna see some eager bung holes ready to make me happy! Fall in!” He could already smell the fear in young inmates.

They ranged in age from 18 to 20. It hadn't been easy, even with his influence for Hayden to get these young delinquents 'accidentally' placed in the adult hard core prison. He had to weed them out, find the weaker ones. Easier to do when you tossed them in with the lions and waited to see who barely survived. These men thought they had survived the lions. They were wrong.

Only one man refused to move. Hayden jumped for joy inside. He liked nothing better than to exert his power. He loved nothing more than squashing a rebellious nature. “What'sa matta boy, you deaf?”

The black boy looked straight ahead. “I ain't no bitch...sir.”

“What's your name boy?”

“Cleveland Acres, Sir”

Without any warning the wooden baton smashed against the back of Cleveland's knees, dropping him to the floor in agonizing pain. Hayden dropped to one knee, his face close to Cleveland's. “Cleveland Acres is it? Sounds like a lovely place to live....boy....Listen good. When you're in this office you'll answer to Dogboy1 you got that Cleveland? You got no rights,

no name and your mission in here is to make it out alive and keep this man - that would be me - happy. No matter what it takes. You got that Dogboy1?"

"Yessir. Dog Dogboy1 sir"

Everything Hayden said was said in a hushed whisper yet loud enough for all the inmates in the office to hear. He looked around and saw the fear in all their faces. Damn this was gonna be fun and easy.

Fabian poured wine for his two house guests. "How romantic for you both. Something I would have written if it weren't so implausible!" Fabian smelled the wine, smiled a toothy smile and then settled onto the divan. "Drink up gents, plenty more where that came from. " Fabian raised his glass "Ahhhh to love"

Stavros and Troy nodded and drank. It was difficult for Troy, whose hands were still shackled from the prison he had just escaped from.

Fabian noticed them for the first time. "Hmmm those have got to be uncomfortable. Would you like me to try and get them off? I hear prison manacles are made from that new kind of steel." He set his glass down and went to retrieve a set of keys from a drawer. Fabian had all kinds of connections, legitimate and otherwise.

"Please Fabian, help him. He risked his life for me," pleaded Stavros.

"Don't worry babe. I saw it all on television, like everyone else. Quite risky and quite daring. You got some set of balls bringing all this danger to MY doorstep!" Fabian fumbled with the set of keys until he settled on a couple.

"I'm sorry Fabian, you're the only friend I could think of..." Stavros wheedled.

"You mean the only one with a house, a garage, influence and a shitload of money to get you out of trouble you mean!" Fabian's eyes narrowed as he settled on one key.

Stavros blushed a bit at Fabian's assessment and thought it best not to deny it, because everything Fabian said was true.

“C’mere good lookin’. HmMMM so this is what a Creatine 170 looks like up close. Scary, impressive and maybe just a bit.....” Fabian inserted a key into the manacle. It was electronic, keyed to the gadget in Troy’s restraints. Troy’s face softened as soon as the manacles dropped away.

“There. You’d have thought they’d change the electronic impulses on those things more than every fifty years. Oh well, the government’s negligence is our salvation. Should make for much better love making I’d think. Unless you’re into that sort of thing and if you were I’d have thought Stavros would be wearing them!”

And then Fabian laughed. He laughed long and hard and Stavros was embarrassed but relieved to have the tension broken.

“Take the bedroom upstairs to your left. Stay as long as you like. We’ll have a bite and then discuss your future. I have a few calls to make.” Fabian got up and took the wine bottle with him.

“Thank you. Thank you” said Stavros as he hugged and kissed Fabian’s handsome face. Once upon a time he and Fabian had been lovers. Fabian’s hard body, salt and pepper hair with goatee gave him the look of a much younger man. He was still a hot catch and he knew it. But today Stavros only had the hots for Troy, and it was obvious he was in no mood to share. Fabian made a mental note to explore the relationship further. There would be time.

Once they found the bedroom, it took them only minutes to dress down. Totally naked, it was as if they were seeing each other for the first time.

“You know once I’m off the Creatine I’m going to start to shrink. The muscles will get smaller,” said Troy as Stavros fingered Troy’s monstrous biceps.

“And less of a killer if what I’ve heard is correct.” Stavros said as he licked at Troy’s pendulous nut sack.

“I won’t be able to protect you as well. What if Jonathan tracks you down?” Troy said as he struggled to maintain his composure.

Stavros laughed. “Oh Troy, I can take that worm on my own. He just caught me by surprise is all. I think seeing you as you really are, is not

going to be such a shock. I'm not that shallow. I don't think." Stavros took the whole of Troy's cock in his mouth, swirling his tongue about his uncut cock head.

"I just want you to lie here with you and be your protector and lover." Troy whispered.

"I've waited a long while to hear that big man!" Stavros swallowed the whole of Troy's huge cock down his throat. There was no gag reflex and Troy took advantage of Stavros' talents.

The contrast between the two men was striking. One had a swimmer's perfect build while the other had the body of a huge muscled monster who was big everywhere.

"I...I can't get my mouth around your cock..." Stavros joked as he swallowed Troy once more.

"Not to worry, I can certainly get mine around yours." Tony lifted Stavros up and brought his waist and full body to rest on his face, Stavros cock quickly met Troy's throat. His awesome throat muscles throbbed and pumped Stavros' cock. Stavros felt like he had inserted his cock into a milking machine.

"Holy Christ...(gasp) oh my god...you need to stop....oh oh I'm too close to cumming...don't want to...not yet..." Stavros could barely speak before Troy released his cock.

He felt the singers cock growing thicker and the pulse of his cock was throbbing rapidly. "I can tell when you are close...hold you off anytime I want.." He lowered Stavros body on top of him so that the two of their cocks pressed together against Troy's ripped abs. "Technically I can suck you off within a minute anywhere anytime. I think it's a side effect of the Creatine." laughed Troy.

"It is a spectacular side effect for sure. Just so long as you don't lose your load in a minute." Stavros laughed and pressed his body tighter against Troy. The monster's hands were strong and they kneaded the tight flesh of Stavros' back, as he trembled from the sheer pleasure of Troy's pressure alongside his spine.

“Wow...were you a masseur in your other life? You have amazing hands.” He turned over on top of Troy as if turning onto a mattress, Troy was just that big and that broad, and firm. Stavros was surprised that Troy’s hands could be as strong but gentle as they were. Stavros stroked Troy’s massive arms as they wrapped about him, and he felt Troy’s cock harden against his backside. Despite himself, he began to wiggle and squirm and position Troy’s cock head against his butt hole.

“Do you mind if I ask what crime put you into prison? I thought the most violent criminals were subjected to Creatine 170?” Stavros reached back and spread his butt cheeks until his asshole rested against Troy’s cock head, which had grown substantially and was making ready for insertion. Stavros closed his eyes in eager anticipation as he reached back and pulled his butt cheeks apart.

“I killed a man. I killed a man out of sheer pride and jealousy.”

Stavros started, his eyes flung open but it was too late. Troy’s gigantic cock head slipped inside him, right past Troy’s sphincter which attempted to snap shut but to no avail. At that moment. Troy’s long blue veined cock shaft pumped rapidly, stretching Stavros’ bung hole with each thrust. There was nothing savage in his technique, only control and assurance that what he was doing was the right thing for both of them.

“FUCKKKKKKKKK...” Learning the truth about Troy and feeling his huge cock slip into him at the same time, put Stavros in the weirdest head space he had ever been in and he had to admit it was an exquisite feeling of love, lust and terrible danger all at once. He nearly fainted from the physical and mental shock.

“Breathe baby, breathe.”

The incredible pain and the searing reality took his breath away and Stavros didn’t think he’d ever breath again. He opened his eyes and realized he had passed out but his belly was covered in his own sperm.

“You’re going to have to learn some control if this relationship is going to work.” Troy joked. He hadn’t had any Creatine in several hours and already he felt his humanity returning to him.

“Oh man, oh man, holy shit! That was so fucking intense.” Stavros barely sat up but wrapped himself around Troy’s massive torso and

luxuriated of the feel of muscled flesh against his body. It was several minutes before they spoke, and it was Stavros who broke the silence.

“You’re a killer. OK, I get that. The whole Creatine drug thing. I was against it when I first heard about it but...but...I know you were ready to kill Jonathan, the man who abducted me. As the Creatine wears off do you think you’d still have the urge to kill again?” Stavros needed to know.

Troy paused for a moment. “Just once more. I think I will kill again if I see this one man again. Yes, I’m pretty sure. Hayden Pettigrew. He is the warden at Falcone Prison. Yes, I’m pretty sure I’d kill him. Creatine or not.” Then Troy kissed Stavros wherever he could reach without loosening Stavros’ grip. “I want you to know that if anything happens, anything to separate us we need to know we will always have this. this thing between us.”

The thought of them ever being separated made Stavros tremble inside. He would never feel this safe again unless he was in Troy’s arms. Suddenly he felt a painful cut to his shoulder, he nearly cried out in pain until he saw Troy holding a steak knife in his hand.

“What the hell?” Stavros struggled to his feet as Troy quickly grabbed and pulled him to him. Troy bled from a shoulder wound as well and he pressed it against Stavros so that their wounds bled into each other. Stavros struggled to get away but Troy held him tightly until his struggles evaporated.

“We are blood now. Matching cuts. Matching hearts. Where ever we are, wherever we go we will always feel each other’s blood, holding us, loving and supporting each other, flowing through our veins.” Troy went silent as Stavros just stared at him, his eyes filled with bewilderment, yet acceptance.

“We aren’t going to ever be separated. We are in this together. We didn’t plan it, fate did.” Stavros rested his head on Troy’s chest. He ignored the light stream of blood that rolled off his shoulder.

“Part realist, part romantic. I’d forgotten I’d ever had those traits. I’m just saying if anything were to happen....”

Stavros put his fingers to Troy’s lips. “Please don’t say anymore.” They stood in silence holding one another. So Stavros was in love with a

killer, and apparently an un-redeemable one. What was he to do now?

Detective Drew Mercer played with his tablet computer. He was watching the latest of the coliseum games, he had money riding on a few of the street fighters Troy Akiru was one of those fighters. Watching the replay of the entertainment part of the festivities, he observed impassively opera singer Stavros Constantin coming up through the stage floor only to be snatched from the air by some crazed fan. What interested him most was that the manacled street fighter appearing from beneath the stage, had not only managed to come out from beneath the platform but then grabbed hold of the singer's legs while manacled and been hauled away as well. That crazed fan must have had some serious upper body strength to carry off two men, one with a boy's body, the other a massive street fighter. Yet he did, and within moments they had all disappeared.

What followed was madness as security and staff promoters scurried to keep the show going and the arena immediately went to the next scheduled bout. Two massive giants entered the ring wearing shorts. Their glistening bodies were masculine perfection on display. Drew stopped the video and rewound back to where the singer had been snatched. There were a lot of questions that needed to be answered. Luckily modern day surveillance was able to track down the three men to an abandoned theatre where they fell off the radar. This was three days ago. Was the singer's apparent kidnapping part of the street fighter's lavish escape?

A few keystrokes later and Drew had the kidnapper's face and personal profile on the screen. A crazed fan, a failed musician who kept a detailed blog that demonstrated he was obsessed with wanting the singer to hear and eventually sing his opera, the kidnapper was quite specific. Seemed a lot of pain and drama just to push a composition which according to the kidnapper was written with Stavros in mind. Confused, Drew tried to figure the connection between the street fighter and the singer. The detective pulled a piece of old-fashioned beef jerky out of his pocket, it helped him think. He dreaded having to call the Falcone's warden about the missing street fighter Troy; that is if he hadn't already heard. It had been three days.

Drew decided maybe it wouldn't be so bad if he had something more to report to the warden other than, they had no idea what the fuck had

happened from beginning to end. "...on the other hand warden we have this information..." He wanted to finish the sentence with something positive. How did Stavros get to the coliseum? Drew decided to look for a flier or its original version, a car. Despite their flight from stage, the three of them didn't just fly away. He dialed the warden's number, because there was no way he could avoid at least alerting Hayden to the chain of events.

Hayden wet his finger and slid into one fine, black, tight bunghole. Dogboy1 squirmed, even as he tried to back away from the single digit probing. "Don't back away from me boy. Let's just taste that pretty asshole." Hayden pulled his finger out of the young man's hole then offered his finger to the next man. "Go on taste it. Taste this pretty boy's butt."

Dogboy2 was a handsome Irish man whose crime was being in the wrong place at the wrong time. He turned his head away from the warden's hand only to have his hair yanked, pulling his face back toward the warden. "You certainly can't be turnin' up your nose to smellin' some sweet boy pussy now is you boy? Don't ever turn away from me. When I tell you to suck this niggers asshole, that's what you damned well better do for me or else...."

Dogboy2 opened his mouth and let the warden roll his pungent finger around his tongue and the roof of his mouth. He frowned and closed his eyes tight, even as he dry heaved. Hayden smiled at the young man's discomfort, then he rose to his feet. All five boys lined up on their knees. Vulnerable, helpless, their tender little holes, cocks and balls were his to do with as he pleased. Life just kept on getting better.

He unfastened his pants and pulled out his cock which was already hard. Anticipation alone had made him eager to bury his thick pole somewhere where it would do the most damage, while doing him the most good. All these social misfits were his pups now and he'd use 'em and train em as he saw fit. Maybe one or two of them might prove to be good street fighter material, but that was way down the road. He wasn't sure he'd made any of them mad enough yet.

Round, tight, covered in black curly fur, his hole barely obscured by his ass hair, Dogboy3 rested his face on his folded arms. He'd been raped

before, by his father, growing up. Instinct told him that this would be no different. Hayden spit on his hand and positioned himself behind Dogboy3.

He placed his hands on both butt cheeks, spit on his cock and eased forward. He loved the little pop when the sphincter slipped over the marine head, the marine cap of his swollen cock head. The warm, wet embracing tightness that spread up his cock shaft as Dogboy3's rounded butt cheeks ground back against his legs warming the warden's crotch. He rubbed the smooth roundness and closed his eyes. Exquisite. The Latin boy squirmed, his teeth clenched, the loud intake and clenching of his teeth was not wasted on Hayden. Lots of men claimed never to have been fucked but the proof always won out in the end. Some screamed, some moaned, some just sighed, moaned and relaxed into a rhythm that matched Hayden's own powerful thrusting, which always started out slow and ended up frenzied and savage.

Hayden pulled his cock out of Dogboy3, stood up and walked around to Dogboy4. His hung prick dangled before Dogboy4's face. "Don't play hard to get boy, and don't make me instruct you on every little fucking detail. Just don't swallow all at once. Lick my balls first, savor the sweat and the smell of the spic's asshole, then lick my dick. There's bound to be a little pre cum up in my piss slit. Remember it's an honor to be the first to actually taste my dick." Hayden's hand went under the man's chin grasping his throat while the other hand rested firmly on top of his head. "Open up dumbass!"

The young black man had barely opened his mouth before Hayden grabbed the man's head and throat and began to throat fuck him as hard and deep as he could, grinding the boy's nose into his crotch, forcing the young man to back up, breathless and choking. Hayden held on tight as he rested his cock in the back of the boy's throat. Dogboy4, choked and gagged and struggled to keep the rising bile in his throat down. Hayden rested on the balls of his feet, his muscled thighs straining through the fabric of his pants while he held Dogboy4's head firmly. He closed his eyes and felt warm bile rush over his cock.

"Sunovabitch!" Hayden exclaimed as he struggled to maintain his grasp of the man's head and throat. When he finally released Dogboy4 he was ready to let go of his load but wasn't sure how he wanted it to happen.

Hayden's thoughts were interrupted by the buzzing of his phone. Reluctantly he answered. Dogboy5 looked up from his position, watching the warden's face go from bored resignation to red faced anger. There was no dialog from the warden but it was clear the other end of the phone was alive with communication.

When the warden finally hung up he looked back over his boys. Dogboy5 was an Asian barely over 5'6" and the others towered over him. Yet, Hayden ordered him to spread on the floor even as he trembled in fearful anticipation. Hayden squatted over the inmates face, unzipping his fatigues so that his wide, muscled, bare ass was exposed. Hayden grabbed the young man's legs and pulled them up so that his butthole was open and exposed, even as Hayden rubbed his butt across Dogboy5's face while inserting his fingers into the young man's butthole.

"Here's a treat for you, Dogboy5, can ya hear me good?" Hayden shifted his weight so that the Asian could hear everything he said. He instructed the other four to get to their feet and line up. "As for the rest of you maggots here's the deal. I got my watch here and I'm gonna time you. This fine perfectly smooth asshole is gonna be fucked by all of you. You each are gonna fuck ol' bok choy here for five minutes each. The boy that takes the longest to shoot his load ...is going to take this lucky man's place eating out my fine, hairy asshole."

Despite the added pressure each of the young men began to stroke their cocks to rock hardness while Hayden shifted his butt over Dogboy5's face. "And you my little chink friend. You get to eat my ass out for the whole twenty minutes while these young bucks are gonna fuck your ass with a frenzy to save their own asses. Watch out for Dogboy1, he's got a fuckin' dick on him that'll surely make you wanna cry. I'll hold your legs up so you won't strain yerself. If you don't mind ah'm gonna beat off with my other hand. I've got a diabolical mind don't I boys!?"

True to his word Hayden raised Dogboy5's legs up high, his big hands easily held both ankles in his big hands while he stroked his cock.

"By the way, spit's gonna be your only lube so...make it count. Welcome to your first prison rape!" Hayden bared his teeth in a vicious grin. Damn the news about Troy. It had been three days and no word except from that dumbass detective to tell him things he already knew like the

escape itself. Did he really think Hayden didn't know what went on with his boys when they were on 'tour' after three days!? On top of that he had to tell Hayden they had no leads. Oh well, he'd take care of it himself. But for now he luxuriated in the muffled whimpers and excellent tonguing of his asshole. It was funny how the longer you sat on a man's face the better he became at eating out your hole, must be damned good eatin'.

"C'mon boy spit on that hole. Chew my ass out or I'm gonna add another 20 minutes to ravagin' that sweet ass!" As Hayden heard the whimpers, and sensed the tears, he thought to himself; America, we have a winner!

Fabian poured another cup of tea for himself, and mentally sized up the two men sitting in his living room. It had been almost two days since their arrival on his doorstep. Stavros and Troy were wanted men, their faces were all over the news. However the reports were slightly wrong in their assessment of events. According to the news reports, Stavros Constantin had been snatched in a daring kidnap/escape plot by murdering street fighter Troy Akiru. Some wannabe composer man named Jonathan something or other had been hurt in a daring raid that had failed to rescue the opera singer. Both men have disappeared into the bowels of the city. Authorities were searching for the two men and awaiting word from the kidnapper regarding a ransom.

Fabian re-read the scrawl across the bottom of the viewing screen. The report was short and followed by a police number to call for anyone who had any information leading to Stavros' rescue. Fabian certainly didn't need the money but he felt uneasy having history's latest version of Bonnie and Clyde hiding out in his home, even though he and Stavros had been friends for many years. The street fighter was another thing. He was hot, dangerously so. He was good looking, and obviously hung. Fabian could sense the passion and rage simmering just beneath the skin's surface and he hungered to know how that rage would manifest itself in bed. Stavros seemed seriously smitten with the monster. He needed to find out for himself, what, if anything he might be missing.

Just then Stavros entered the room. Fabian turned away from the window to greet his old friend with his sincerest smile. "Darling, you and

the boyfriend are all over the news. Burning up the social networks with 'sightings'. Did you know you were spotted in Brazil? In Starbucks I believe." Fabian laughed, Stavros did not.

"He's not my boyfriend." He spread himself across the divan, perplexed at his situation. He wasn't cut out to be a fugitive; he loved the spotlight too much. He already missed the applause of the crowds.

Fabian sat down next to his friend. "So, what's it like? What's he like?" Fabian inquired.

Stavros knew his friend well and knew exactly what he meant. "The sex? You won't believe me but...but I don't know."

Fabian looked at him with a look of sheer incredulity. "You are kidding me right? I mean you have had sex with him. I know this, I've heard... rumblings!" Fabian wasn't going to let his friend off that easy. He wanted answers. Even if he had to go into the trenches himself.

"No ...I mean, yes, we've had sex. Would mind blowing sound too clichéd?" He said.

Fabian leaned in closer. "Not if it's true."

"It's like a shot of some hallucinogenic drug mixed with some kind of pain killer. You know it's happening but...it's like it's happening to someone else. Someone you don't know. It's you, and you're feeling him inside you and then you're not, it's like some kind of numb flight. I don't know how much sense this makes its just...the most awesome experience every time its new, its different and when you look at him it's like he physically changes from demon to angel and back again almost with every breath. Swallowing him opens my throat and you know how protective I am of my throat. Am I making sense?"

Fabian sat back and narrowed his eyes. Oh yes, Stavros was making sense all right. So much sense that Fabian now knew for sure that he had to try Troy for himself.

"You say you're NOT....hooked up or anything?" He had to know.

"Fabian if you want him you can have him. He's great sex, god knows. But he's a killer and he's a wanted man. What kind of a future would we

have?" Stavros got up and left the room quickly. He didn't want Fabian to see the tears in his eyes.

But Fabian did see the tears.

"Fuck me, fuck me like you're going to kill me in the morning!" Fabian couldn't believe that he had so easily found Troy sitting alone in the garden, with no Stavros in tow. They had been warned to stay low and to stay together. And he looked smaller. A few days without Creatine 170, the drug that had made him a monstrous killer was wearing off. Fabian decided if he was going to experience what Stavros had then he'd better act fast.

"Excuse me?" Troy looked up to see a panting, desperately in heat, Fabian.

"You heard me. There's nothing between you and Stavros, so there's nothing stopping you from fucking me!" Fabian had torn his clothes off and was standing before Troy in all his beautiful nakedness. "Now be the animal you were bred to be and tear me apart!" Fabian leapt onto Troy's lap seconds before Troy got up to his full height, dropping Fabian hard onto the ground.

"What the fuck! I just came out here to try and put a little space between Stavros and me. I'm thinking of turning myself in. This is no life for Stavros. His voice belongs to the world. Not locked up in here with me...a monster...a killer." Troy lowered his eyes, he had given this some thought. He hadn't talked to Stavros.

"I don't know what Stavros told you but I don't throw my dick into just anyone. " He stood his full height which had begun to diminish as the Creatine 170 left his body.

He was still massive enough to get Fabian's heart racing. "C'mon man. Stavros clearly told me that you are fair game." Fabian ripped his shirt open eager to have Troy inside him. "I'm not fair game as you put it...I appreciate your keeping us away from the police but I'm not for sale..." He started to walk away.

"Oh? Aren't you? Excuse me I thought you were in the street fighter game. I believe you are for sale. A killer for hire." Fabian stood before Troy

butt naked. His cock was rising fast.

Troy looked at Fabian barely hiding his contempt. "I thought you were a friend."

"I am a friend, use me. Or I can be unfriendly and call the police." Fabian sidled up against Troy, his cock hard.

"Just fuck me man. I'm not asking for the world here. I've fantasized about you street fighters since I was a boy. I may never get this close to any of you ever again. I helped you. Now it's your turn to help me." Fabian pleaded, his pride gone, his hunger complete, but he was adamant.

Troy reached out and grabbed Fabian's shoulders and spun him around so that his butt was warm against Troy's thighs. His arm reached around Fabian's neck as he grabbed his cock and guided it toward Fabian's quivering buttocks. His ass sweated heavily and nearly screamed with agony as Troy spit on his cock for his own comfort, not for Fabian's. Then he brutally pushed his cock past Fabian's sphincter and ground it deep into his fuck hole, so long, so thick. Fabian felt his scream stick in his throat as he went nearly breathless. Troy was going for the savage fuck. His hand encircled Fabian's throat so that the man could barely breathe and he gasped for air. Fabian's arms flailed about like windmills as he sought to free himself. Troy pushed, and he pushed hard. He held Fabian's hip steady as he roughly pushed piston fucked his way in and out. Fabian whimpered and cried and his screams of agony faded away to mere whimpers of pain, pleasure and resignation. His breath got shorter as Troy fucked him so fiercely that he hardly noticed Troy's hand had tightened around his throat.

"Troy! Stop it, stop it right now" Stavros shouted, breaking the spell.

Troy was surprised to hear Stavros' voice but it didn't stop him from wanting to choke Fabian while he was fucking him. It was actually an experience that Fabian would repeat often in the future with similar results. His cock was harder than it had ever been. Nevertheless Troy released Fabian by yanking his cock out quickly. Fabian collapsed onto the ground, his tortured hole dripping with Troy's hot load. While his cock jettisoned its load onto the pavement, he gasped for air, taking in huge swallows. He understood now what Stavros couldn't put into words and watched as

Stavros lead Troy away from him. “Bastard” he thought. Troy would certainly have killed him if Stavros hadn’t intervened.

Fabian crawled to where he had left his clothes on the ground. He reached in the pocket and pulled out his cell phone. He punched in three numbers. “Hello police. I want to collect that reward on street fighter Troy”. He rubbed his hole which had already prolapsed from the severe fucking Troy had given him. Paybacks are a bitch. He waited as they put him on hold.

Drew Mercer chewed on caffeine gum, his heart was pounding as it always did when his head was full of ideas. A solid lead had been dropped in his lap. Should he go charging in like a hero and rescue Stavros and single handedly knock out the street fighter and bring him in? OR Should he call for backup and storm in OR should he deliver the news personally to Warden Hayden, Maybe he’d get a promotion, maybe give him some good tips on future Creatine 170 matches. Or should he call from the house itself and have the Warden there to witness and be a part of the entire takedown? His palms sweated as he headed toward the elevators. He would have the warden there to witness the capture. Certainly he’d alert the media, this was going to be brutal. Just the way all the men he knew played it. Some just played better than others.

Hayden slammed Dogboy1’s face into the wall, grasping the back of the boy’s neck. Dogboy’s hands were flat against the wall as Hayden savagely tore into his buttocks. The phone call came just as the warden was blasting his cumload into Dogboy’s sore ass. What he heard on the other end of the line caused him to yank his prick out of dogboy’s ass while it was still squirtin’ his load.

“Damn” Hayden muttered to no one in particular. His cock was still dripping cum over the back of dogboy’s leg but his cock was now harder than it had been throughout his previous man on man savagery a minute ago.

Hayden closed out the previous call and immediately connected with another, “Yeah, bring my flier around, Daddy’s goin’ huntin’.” He turned

his attention to the rest of his boys. “You pups go shit, shower, shave and shampoo. I may definitely need you later!” Hayden wanted to celebrate. The detective had found his boy Troy. Hayden figured he’d be down at least a pint of Creatine 170 in his blood. He would be easy to take down in his weakened state. Hayden lived for the big fight, he’d shoot Troy up first, just to make it interesting. Troy was gonna pay for this little transgression. Big time. Hayden reached in his drawer and grabbed a ready syringe of Creatine 170. Troy was gonna be hungry. Something that Hayden counted on.

By the time Hayden arrived at Fabian’s house, Drew was already there talking to Fabian, getting details. Troy and Stavros huddled together in the upstairs bedroom of the house, daring not to move. Stavros had seen Drew’s car land in the drive of the house. Curiosity got the better of him. He made himself small and discretely listened outside the study door as Fabian betrayed them both.

“Naturally I feared for my friend’s safety. Stavros and I go back a few years so I was totally stunned by his behavior. When he showed up at my door with this...this street fighter I tried to run but the big one, the street fighter physically assaulted me. It seems Stavros may or may not be a willing participant in his own kidnapping. They have no idea I called you. They, well Troy has been watching me night and day and this is the first opportunity I’ve had to call you, so please, please be quick and try not to break anything. I...I...I was even tied up for hours. They demanded I give them the room at the top of the stairs to the left. Please hurry!”

Stavros was furious. Fabian was playing the total innocent and selling them out in the process. He quickly bound up the stairs. He had to warn Troy and avoid the police.

Then Stavros stopped, Fabian hadn’t completely sold him out. In his lies to the detective he had left Stavros a little wiggle room. How kind of his old friend to watch out for him, he thought sarcastically. But he was pretty sure he loved Troy, or was at least in lust with him. The sex was mind blowing and he had many traits that made him perfect for Stavros. But where could it go? Once they captured Troy, and they would...he’d go back to prison, and to killing. There was no life and certainly no future for the both of them. If he openly volunteered to help Troy, he would seem to be complaisant in his own kidnapping. Maybe he would end up doing prison

time. Maybe he would become a Creatine 170 experiment himself. A killer, a street fighter like Troy. Fighting opponents together in the same ring. A romantic notion but not the destiny planned for a renowned opera star. Stavros placed both hands over his eyes. His choice was clear, it wasn't his choice of preference but he had to survive this intact or his career would be over, his life would be over. In a moment of stark realization he let out a cry. of anguish.

“What was that?” Drew had heard Stavros' anguished cry in the hall and he quickly pulled out his taser, which he set on stun but not to kill, he wanted Troy alive. Drew rushed from the study into the hallway in time to see Stavros's surprised face covered in tears. He took aim. “No, No, it's me Stavros Constantin! The man you want is upstairs...I ..I barely escaped!” Stavros surprised himself as he pointed to the upstairs. Drew raced up the stairs past him, his taser on the ready. Momentarily Stavros' eyes met Fabian's. He was ashamed and he would hate Fabian forever for putting him in this position. Even Fabian smiled at Stavros' duplicity in what was sure to be Troy's capture.

The warden's flier was just landing on the drive when Hayden glanced up at the house and saw a much smaller Troy Akiru scampering out the second floor window. Warden Hayden grinned and gnashed his teeth as he fumbled with the dart gun loaded with Creatine 170. Catching a much smaller, more docile little Asian was no fun, no challenge. The Creatine wouldn't bulk him up immediately but it would infuse him with strength and rage enough to fight back, like a mustang being roped. Hayden ran up to the house with Troy still in his sights, he took aim and fired.

Troy had been lying in bed when he heard the commotion in the hallway. It took only moments to sum up the cause of it all. He couldn't believe that Stavros had sold him out. He had expected as much from Fabian though, and was sure that he was the bitch who had set it all in motion. His eyes flooded with tears of angst and betrayal. He didn't want to go back to prison for sure. Even though it was not his plan to have escaped prison in the first place, the last few days of love and freedom had been intoxicating. He would reluctantly go back to prison, he had no intentions

of fighting capture. But his first impulse was to flee and he gave in to it. It took a moment to see his only route of escape was out the window and out he climbed. He saw the flier landing on the drive, certainly an unmarked police flier. He leaped onto the tree outside the window as he headed down the trunk of the tree he felt the dart enter his shoulder. Instinctively he knew what it was and he felt the rage course through his body.

“Circle around the estate we’ll catch him. Lock your tasers on stun, I want this rogue bastard alive!” Hayden tasted blood. He’d capture his prisoner and then he’d put him through all kinds of delightful sexual hell that only the sickness of Hayden’s mind could contrive.

“Please, please don’t hurt him!” Stavros pleaded hanging onto Drew’s arm, he wanted to give Troy as much time as he needed to escape. Drew pushed Stavros away, his eyes portrayed his confusion as he tried to figure out whether Stavros had indeed been a willing victim.

Fabian took hold of Stavros and wrapped his arms around him. “There, there my friend. You are free now. Don’t worry about him coming back to claim you again. The police will surely do their job.” Stavros allowed Fabian to comfort him, but he knew he would never trust this man again and he would pay for what he had done.

Troy ran through the woods that surrounded Fabian’s estate where he was sure to find a good hiding place but every instinct in him wanted to fight, not run. He stopped in front of a grove of trees and turned around to see Warden Hayden bearing down on him. “C’mon Hayden come for me!” He yelled out. He was smaller than he’d been but his rage made him feel bigger.

Hayden advanced on him. “Feeling strong aren’t cha boy? Feel you can take on the master?” Hayden taunted him as he approached. Troy’s hands formed into fists, as he prepared to fight.

Hayden’s fist came at him rapidly, repeatedly pounding Troy’s face until he dropped to his knees. Blood flowed freely from his battered face.

“Silly man. I took a little of that Creatine 170 myself. They are right. You do feel like a warrior king on this shit. You didn’t think I’d come after you unprepared did you?”

Troy looked up from his kneeling position. Then he sprung up and tackled Hayden to the ground. His fist pummeled fast and furious and Hayden raised his arms to cover his face.

“You haven’t been doing this as long as I have!” Troy yelled. He clenched his fists into one and brought it down hard on Hayden’s chest. The felled warden gasped and regurgitated, choking on his own vomit. Meanwhile Drew steadied his aim. Hayden was not winning the fight. As he fired, he missed, but he alerted Troy to his presence. Troy leaped away from Hayden and resumed his run through the underbrush.

It was nightfall before Stavros awoke from his sedative induced sleep. The day had been challenging. Fabian and he hadn’t spoken but Stavros remained in his house. Despite it all, he and Fabian had been friends for years. It was true that he would hate and distrust Fabian for the rest of his life but for now it was still a haven just not with his lover beside him. He would find a way to make Fabian pay for what he had done. And get Troy back as well. But for now Stavros merely stared out the window. Somewhere out there Troy was freshly enraged and on the run, alone.

Warden Hayden would be in the hospital for a while. The detective Drew Mercer had given up chasing Troy to tend to the very badly battered warden of the Falcone prison. Stavros looked out at the sky, gently and lovingly fingering the healed wound on his shoulder. Somewhere out there Troy had to be doing the same thing. It was his idea.

STRANGER IN MOSCOW

Stavros woke up screaming. His friend Fabian began patting him down with a hand cloth. Stavros had been breaking out into a cold sweat for days now. It had been over a week since Troy had disappeared into the underbrush surrounding Fabian's estate. Fabian's betrayal of him and Troy had led Warden Pettigrew right to their hiding place. Stavros hated to have to distance himself from Tony who had beat the Warden into a coma.

Stavros violently pushed Fabian away from him. "Leave me alone. Don't ever touch me again. I trusted you and you betrayed me! Because of you I had to sell out ...give up Troy!" Stavros wiped his brow. He was sweating buckets but he wasn't sick just terribly disappointed.

"You should be thanking me! I got you away from that madman, that killer you dragged into my house! I'm your best friend. You are alive yes?" Fabian picked the face cloth from the floor. He had made what he thought was the best choice. Troy and Stavros were not meant to be and he was just the man to prove it. "Why don't you recuperate here for awhile? See how this plays out. This Warden Pettigrew is not a fool. He is sure that you ran away willingly with Troy therefore making you an accomplice to murder. Is that the way you guys planned it?"

Stavros took a sip of water from the nightstand by the bed. "No... No...that wasn't the plan. I love him and he loves me. We just wanted to be together. Guess I was a bit naive to think we'd get away ..." Stavros' mood changed. "That gave you no right to turn us in. What you did was wrong and now look at the chain reaction *YOU* created!" Stavros blew his nose into a tissue then tossed it angrily onto the floor. Fabian picked it up and placed it in the trash basket.

“Ok you’re mad, I get that. Eventually you will realize that this was for the best.” Fabian sat still on the bed, his hands clasped in his lap. He wanted to hold Stavros, to comfort him but wisely knew this would not be the time. His mind was busy thinking of how he could correct this. He got up from the bed and waked to the door. He didn’t want to look back and see the anger and disappointment on the face of his old friend.

Meanwhile...

Hospital security was quietly monitoring three video cams placed all around the hospital including the rooms of its VIP patients. Hayden Pettigrew was once such patient, yet he had no security cams canvassing his room. It was at his request that he not be covered by any more equipment than necessary. When he slipped into a coma the news made all the telecommunication systems. The world knew what had happened and that the need for security had been downgraded to low status.

Troy was no stranger to high security surveillance and he knew how to get in and out of tight situations All that had been business, this time it was personal. He had been without the steroid Creatine 170 for a while now. The famed steroid that had turned him into a muscled killing machine was almost out of his system, though he didn't need Creatine for what he had in mind. Hayden was an ordinary man in an ordinary coma sustaining ordinary life threatening illness. Troy intended to put the monstrous Hayden out of his misery.

He had been without his beloved Stavros for weeks now and he hungered for him, missed his love tremendously. Blaming this tragic separation on Hayden he was now here to correct the situation. Hayden was and would be relentless in his search for Troy and Stavros. As soon as he came out of the coma his first order would be to find them and bring them in. Hayden would not kill them, of this he was sure. Hayden was the torturing, gloating kind. Troy already knew from experience that Hayden would make them both wish they were dead. Hayden would not be that merciful.

Troy found the room that housed Hayden’s comatose body. The first thing he did was to step on the cords and cables that led into Hayden’s body. Hundreds of years had passed and medicine had advanced but the trappings were still the same. The cords, the cables the buttons and even the

steady beep that monitored his brain waves and his heart rate were the same. Troy wanted to torture him, make him pay. His strongest arm reached down and his hands stretched around Hayden's windpipe and he squeezed, he squeezed as hard as he could.

Back at Fabian's estate...

"Moscow of the future, an ultra-modern utopia, where eagles soar over a Kremlin considered the sacred heart of a Eurasian continent. Above and under the ground, at insane speed, flew electric trains, transferring the city's population to distant regions of factories, business institutions, schools, universities. In the city were theaters, circuses, winter sports halls, stores and clubs in vast buildings under glass domes." The narrator of the film was a Russian sounding actor with an accent infused with just the right amount of 'friendly' to entice the traveler. Stavros hit the computer key, changing the panoramic view of Russia once again only without the sound.

"All right, I watched the video as you asked. What's so fascinating about Russia? Why so insistent on me seeing this 'travelogue?'" Despite his lack of interest in traveling anywhere without Tony, let alone Russia, Stavros let himself be talked into viewing the Russian documentary.

"OK, hear me out. I know you have no reason to trust me but this is on the up and up. I have a very good friend who is head of the Bolshoi in Russia. I talked to him and have arranged for you to go into rehearsal for your own highlighted show. Just you singing pieces from various Russian operas." Fabian relaxed - he could already see the ego in Stavros paying attention. Stavros could not resist being in the spotlight. Even his current troubles which had him in the news lately had been a little boost for his public profile and no one but Fabian would have recognized it in him.

"The Bolshoi? I get to do selections of my choosing? Lots of money, my own rehearsal times, first class travel arrangements?" Stavros sat up in bed.

He was intrigued, and for the moment Troy was the farthest from his mind, which was as Fabian had planned it.

"Anything you want, darling. My friend is coming by the house today. He is aware of your current troubles and will handle you with care." Fabian

smiled his most winning smile, because he had won this round. Now to get his friend to the house.

“Who is this friend Fabian? Do I know him? Have I heard of him?” Stavros inquired.

“Darling he is Nicolai Betrevsky, the head of the Bolshoi and a great fan of yours!” Fabian added ‘great fan’ as further enticement. Stavros sat up in bed and clapped his hands together. It was just what he needed!

While back at the hospital...

Hayden Pettigrew apparently ‘woke’ from his coma and his strong grasp of Troy’s wrist showed a remarkable recovery.

“You fool! You are so predictable. Anyone would have seen the red flags of my fake coma, anyone with a brain that hadn’t been eaten away by Creatine 170”! Hayden wrestled the weakened fighter to the floor. Troy grimaced as Hayden threatened to break off his hands at the wrist.

“And you thought you’d kill me did you?!” Hayden laughed as he applied more pressure on Troy’s wrist. His laughter summoned the guards to his room where they drew their tasers, all aimed at Troy. When Hayden felt safe he released Troy who fell to the floor rubbing his wrists.

“Put this fool in cuffs and escort him back to the prison where he belongs. And start him on massive Creatine 170 doses. I want to book this monster for a string of battles. He’ll make up all the lost time and money in no time. He’ll be in fighting condition by next month!”

Each guard took hold of an arm. Hayden stood behind him, his hospital smock was open, his cock swung free and visible as he rubbed it against Troy’s backside. Then he placed Troy’s hand on his cock.

“Remember this cock boy? Used to slide it up in all kinds of places inside you. You swallowed it a few times and your sweet asshole squeezed it dry on numerous occasions.”

Troy felt Hayden’s huge cock in his hand and resisted the urge to squeeze it so hard it would come off in his hands.

“I know what you’re thinking boy, I know you wanna do me all kinds of bodily injury but you ain’t gonna and ya wanna know why?” Hayden

lowered his voice before speaking directly into Troy's ear. "I said...do you wanna know why?"

Troy trembled as he spoke. "No, I don't want to know why..." Troy braved his answer.

"Smart ass. You won't be talkin' so wise assed once I pass that sweet ass around to mah boys at Falcone prison ya big faggot! The reason you ain't gonna hurt me is because you want to spare your pretty little boyfriend with the sweet voice!"

Troy perked up, his body stiffened. This was all for Stavros but in the moment he had forgotten about his love, who was on the run.

"You leave him alone!" Troy struggled against his cuffs to no avail.

"Your boyfriend lied when he gave you up!"

Troy startled, "Gave me up?" Troy couldn't believe what he was hearing.

"That's right. Your little bitch and his rich friend gave you up. Called the cops and accused you basically of kidnapping him!"

Troy's knees buckled, he couldn't believe what Hayden was telling him, yet in his heart he knew it was true. He had escaped but he had heard nothing of Stavros being even held for questioning.

"But you know something? I don't believe a single fucking word that comes out of that pretty mouth of his and as soon as I can I'm gonna hound that fucker until I have reason to at least get him in the office and then I'm gonna break that motha fucker hard!" Hayden was dying for a cigar. Hospital rules were hospital rules.

"You leave him alone! Stay away from him!" Troy was terrified for Stavros. In the hands of Warden Pettigrew, his delicate boyfriend would break into a million pieces emotionally and physically.

"What loyalty, even after he threw your sorry ass to the hounds! Tossed your ass right under the bus. Man that must make you feel real bad. Take him away boys. By the way Troy I got a new fetish now. Fuckin' em long, hard and dry. Satisfies my *blood* lust if you know what I mean!"

Hayden patted Troy on the ass before nodding the order to get him out of his sight.

Hayden laughed and saluted his victory. He wasn't lying though. He was going to find Stavros and make that little queen spill his guts and after he was through passing him round the Falcone prison system he'd make sure Troy knew that Stavros was going to be his permanent bitch! Hayden laughed as he punched the nurses' buzzer

"Bring me my goddamned cigars!! I don't care about the rules I am Warden Hayden Pettigrew!!" Then he laughed some more.

Meanwhile on the phone back at Fabian's...

"Ugh, that little diva is more trouble than he's worth! His voice isn't what it was, I am told. He was snatched from an arena for god's sake. An arena! Promoting *street fighting*. Fabian, please, you are my dear friend and we go back years but don't ask me to bring this spoiled child to the Bolshoi. My reputation will be ruined!"

Nicolai was pleading with Fabian not to call in an old favor. Fabian knew many people in many industries. They owed him favors. He was calling his Russian friend because he owed his friend Stavros a big one.

"Not ruined. Maybe tainted just a tad but you'll recover, you always do. Besides I'm putting up the money personally to back this show. He'll sing greats from all the great Russian Operas, it'll be a coup. Russians will love it. They will love that he tried. You will make money darling."

Fabian had the money to invest, he knew it wouldn't be a total loss although the gamble on Stavros' voice was anyone's bet. He had to allow his friend the chance and his other reason was even more important.

"I need to get him out of America. He's involved with this street fighter who is nothing but trouble. An animal and if it weren't for some quick thinking Stavros would be sitting in a cell next to him."

Fabian was watching the news monitor as he spoke. He pressed his communicator into his ear to further his conversation with Nicolai. His eyes never left the screen as the images of Troy being led away in cuffs from the Health Center where Hayden Pettigrew had just miraculously recovered from his coma. "Bastards" he muttered into the mouthpiece.

“I could not hear you darling, what did you say?” Nicolai was not sure what he had heard.

“I said BASTARDS!! That Warden Pettigrew who trampled my azaleas while he and his goons searched my home, is out of his coma and he has that street fighter thug in custody!” Fabian practically spat out the news report.

“You should be happy now? The street fighter is away from your precious singer.” Nicolai had never understood Americans and their multiplicities.

Fabian explained, “If Troy is locked up Stavros will want to see him, be near him. Offer support. ‘But I love him’...gah, I can hear it now. That is why you will come today and have Stavros on the jet to Moscow tonight. This is not a negotiation Nicolai.”

Nicolai sensed the urgency and felt it foolish to try to argue with his old friend. His deep sigh was audible but it was just the sound Fabian wanted to hear. Nicolai giving in to his requests.

“I’ll be there soon. Have the little one dressed and packed.” He said as he hung up the phone.

“Won’t be necessary. He has nothing.” *Except me looking out for him.* Fabian ended the communication.

Hours later at Falcone Prison.....

In the deepest darkest solitary basement of the prison, Troy was strapped spread-eagled to the St. Andrews cross. He was hot, naked and sweat stung his eyes. He felt more anger than anything else. It was his anger that helped him to bear the indignities of Hayden Pettigrew.

“So this is the result of what happens when there is no Creatine 170 coursing through your veins. You’re just a man. A very angry little man.” Hayden taunted him.

“You are so mistaken, you sick fuck. I am never afraid of a bully. With or without the Creatine 170 which you need, not me!” Shouted Troy.

“Oh you have always been a little hot head. I’m gonna whip your sweet smooth yellow Chinese ass into such subservience your hole will

automatically pucker at my mere entry into this room!” Laughed Hayden.

Troy trembled a bit. The term 'entry' indicated that Hayden would be coming and going. It meant that he intended to keep Troy in this dungeon. He would concentrate on escape later. He had to rescue or at least warn Stavros, his true love, that the monster was free.

Hayden rubbed his hands over Troy's back several times before punching him in the sides, and then he pounded him as hard as his Creatine 170 muscles allowed. Troy cried out several times. The restraints kept him from falling but the pain radiated throughout his body. Just as the pain seemed to stop, Hayden would body punch him again. When Hayden finally took a pause, he brought his hands to his face and rubbed Troy's sweat and blood over his face, his tongue tasting Asian body fluids on his hands. His body nearly shook with held back tears that represented years of longing and frustration. And now Troy was his, bound and captive and no one was going to have access to him again. Certainly not that whiny bitch opera singer. No, not ever.

Hours later in a jet headed toward Moscow....

“Many varieties of good Russian vodkas, mixers and the best caviar for our little divo!” Nicolai was intrigued by Stavros whom he had never met before. He knew only of Stavros' reputation on and off the stage. What Nicolai wasn't prepared for was Stavros' stunning handsomeness. Nicolai poured vodka and made a small plate of caviar, cheeses and grapes for Stavros who hadn't had time to eat. Fabian had hustled him out of the house and onto the jet in record time. Catching his breath was something he had not been allowed to do. Fabian had a gift for distracting people from the bigger picture.

“I have to admit, when Fabian told me about the Bolshoi's desire to have me sing there I was blown away and totally, totally flattered. I didn't know the Russians were even aware of me!” Stavros was indeed flattered and his current troubles, as Fabian had planned, had faded into the background.

“Well, uh...yes...yes...the maestro is very much well known and beloved in Moscow. I understand many of your vocals have set records for

downloads and already there is talk of immediate sell out of these coming performances. This should be the crowning achievement of your career!”

Nicolai had been instructed to lay it on thick. Stavros’ ego needed the nourishment and it would be one way to keep him in line. Such a high strung divo, but magnificent, thought Nicolai. He decided he would make this bird forget all about the street fighter back home.

“So, please, tell me all the things you like. Especially in bed. I would very much like to seal our business with a strong intimacy. Tell me please, how can I get into your bed or get you into mine?” Nicolai moved in closer to Stavros who was suddenly overwhelmed by the charm, the setting, the good looks of the man who was going to change his life. He leaned in forward and their lips met.

Troy screamed....

“Ahh I knew I could still get it out of you. Shall I do it again?” and Hayden took hold of Troy’s forearm and bit down hard, his teeth made the veins in his arms jump and as much as he tried he could not stifle the scream that Hayden pulled from him.

“Tasty boy. Your flesh is as soft as I remember.” Hayden continued to bite Troy until his screams became mere gurgles of madness and indignation. “Guess that card is played out. What shall I do next? Shall I torture those exquisite testicles? Damn Creatine for taking away those large plump nuts I used to enjoy so much.” Hayden stood behind Troy and licked the sweat from his neck as he took Troy’s balls in his hand and he squeezed. Gently at first, then he began pumping them in his hand. Opening and closing, tighter with each clench.

As the pressure increased so did the pain in Troy’s ball sac. He tried to will his cock not to respond but his dick was already at half mast and continued to grow as Hayden squeezed harder and harder. Once again Troy’s vocal chords were put to the test but his screams fell on deaf ears.

While on the jet...

Stavros’ legs were raised and his feet wrapped around Nicolai’s neck. His hands rubbed up and down the furry Russian’s muscled body as Nicolai rested his fingers against Stavros’ nipples and squeezed, tweaked, teased, and squeezed some more. Stavros’ stomach trembled as his insides churned

noisily. Nicolai's cock was hitting him in places that hadn't been touched in a long time. Not since...Stavros didn't want to think about Troy.

Nicolai was a handsome, brutish man much like Troy and he knew how to handle a delicate flower like Stavros. Nicolai held Stavros' waist as he pumped in harder and deeper, savoring every whimper, gasp, and moan that came from the toned body beneath him. To hear this beautiful American whimper at his mercy made him stronger. It made him feel like a man, like a man in charge. He had Stavros' body for now but he decided he wanted more and if the way to the man's heart was through his sexuality and his ego, Nicolai would give him more sex than he'd dreamed possible. Singing at the Bolshoi would handle his ego.

Stavros' hole opened wider and he pushed down further on Nicolai's hard cock.

"Fuck me man, fuck me hard! Ain't nuthin like doin' it in a jet man. Nuthin like it. Not in a Bentley, not even a Rolls, this is a whole nother level of decadence."

Nicolai laughed at the singer's enthusiasm. He reached for the vodka bottle on the stand opened it and poured its contents into Stavros' mouth. The alcohol went everywhere and Stavros laughed like a school boy as Nicolai poured vodka down his throat and fucked him as hard as he could. The strokes varied but their lust for each other at that moment did not.

Hayden took Troy's cock in his hand and squeezed...

"Will ya lookit that, already dripping pre-cum like you are pissing it natural. Was squeezing your balls all that is required to stir your memory Troy? Here let me do it again!"

Hayden took Troy's cock in one hand and his balls in the other and while he squeezed Troy's nut sack he slapped at the growing hardness of Troy's cock and as predicted, Troy began to ejaculate pre-cum as easily as if he were pissing. He closed his eyes. There was no way to disguise what was happening to his body in his head. Hayden released Troy's balls. With one hand he squeezed, slapped and milked Troy's cock, while the other hand gathered the precious pre load. There had to be at least a tablespoon of the fluid in Hayden's palm but he drank from it as if it were a full cup. It was sweet and sticky on his lips.

“Damn, damn, damn” he uttered as he licked his hands and fingers and finally the head of Troy’s cock.

Troy barely breathed. He had been beaten down, bloodied and bruised and his strength was minimal yet he spoke loud enough so Hayden would hear him. “Careful Hayden, your humanity is starting to show. You don't want your boys to think you have emotions...not for this boy.”

Hayden rose and glared at Troy. “Why do you always taunt me? Is it rewarding, taunting me, hating me?” Hayden’s face was wet with sweat so his tears blended nicely.

“No, it is not” Troy replied. “You took my humanity a long time ago. The system took yours. This...this is all we have. And then, I met Stavros.” Troy was weak from thirst yet Hayden would not give him water.

“You think that little bitch gave you back your humanity?” Hayden seethed, he knew Stavros had helped Troy but he was also there when he sold him out.

Hayden let his fingers play outside of Troy’s rectum. Not entering just toying with the sweet tight rim of his asshole which puckered, as if it had a mind of its own. Hayden ran the side of his palm inside the crack of Troy’s ass. He held his hand to his face and smelled the mustiness, the sweat, the smell of a man who had lived, who had fought in the arena, who had run from the law, and who had loved another man through it all. Those experiences were translated into the smells on his hands.

His cock had never lost its firmness from the moment he set Troy on the cross but now, with Troy’s essence all over him his cock was like a steel rod. And true to his word Hayden celebrated his blood lust by attempting to shove his un-lubricated cock into Troy. The difficulty of tightness and friction demanded lube of some kind but Hayden was adamant. He wanted Troy to hurt.

But he couldn’t kill him. For many reasons, the main reason being financial. Falcone Prison had invested in Troy as a fighter and the shareholders would have his head if Troy were to suddenly disappear. They were the ones on his back to get Troy back in the arena fighting again, making money for them. He would just as soon see Troy dead. If he could not love Troy and have it returned then he’d rather have him destroyed. If

he couldn't have Troy's blood on his hands he'd have it on his cock. Damn, life *was* what happened when you were making plans. Maybe just a little dab of spit to grease the wheel.

Two weeks later...

St Petersburg was founded in 1703 by Tsar Peter the Great. It is a city with a rich and exciting history. From the early days of Peter's 'Venice of the North' to today's incredibly sophisticated and sprawling metropolis, the city had always bustled with life, intrigue, revolution and mystery. In 2300 AD it has remained one of the most beautiful, fascinating and most significant cities in Europe.

In 2300 AD Bolshoi was one of the leading ballet and opera companies in the world: The imposing home of the internationally-famed. For much of its history, Moscow's Bolshoi was overshadowed by the Marinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, but with Moscow's restoration as the capital in 2230 it gained preeminence. The Bolshoi has kept its reputation as the premier arena for the arts. Its performances elicited international acclaim, and an evening at the Bolshoi has remained one of Moscow's sublime pleasures. The lovely, acoustically-excellent theater was a captivating venue that was sure to bring Stavros' talents to the forefront of the operatic world.

Nicolai was not so sure but he planned to do everything in his power to not let Stavros make a fool of himself or the Bolshoi. The Bolshoi Theater meant the grandeur of tradition, it meant the scale of artistic individualities gathered in its troupe, it meant the repertoire, it meant concentrated creative life, it meant daily hard work and regular improvement of performance. Nikolai was the current keeper of that particular flame and he would make Stavros appreciate that tradition if it killed him. Or retired him for good.

Which is why Nicolai chose to bring Stavros to St. Petersburg for the daily grind of music training and tutoring, before his appearance in Moscow. Stavros resisted at first but knew Nicolai was right. If this was to be a triumph he would have to work harder than ever to maintain the reputation of the Bolshoi and his own. There was no time to think about Troy. Troy seemed to have dropped off the face of the earth, and despite his busy schedule and self absorption he worked hard because his heart was breaking in the background. He was still in love with Troy.

And the days moved on into weeks.....

Stavros sat up in Nicolai's bed. It was a late morning one of the rare times he was allowed to sleep late. Nicolai kept Stavros totally isolated from everything and everyone. He had convinced Stavros that if he were to make his comeback at the Bolshoi and make himself the most spectacular singer ever, he would have to work, work, work as was the tradition of all things successfully Russian. Nicolai censored all news from every news medium and basically kept Stavros living in the ivory tower he had constructed with Fabian's help.

"No darling there has been no word from Troy, or even the authorities. I think when he wants to find you he will. Don't worry about it. I'm handling it here. You focus on your career. Yes, Yes I love you too darling. Goodbye!"

It was enough to keep Stavros assured that all was being done to find Troy.

Meanwhile...

Hayden's firm grip on Troy's nipples were painful. The more Troy grimaced the harder Hayden pulled. He switched from full nipple torture to just teasing and paining the tips. Troy hadn't been treated well in many days, as Hayden attempted to remove all traces of rebellion and humanity from Troy's being. Although the board knew Troy was in custody, they were content to know that Hayden was doing all he could to ensure Troy would be ready to go back into the ring again soon and that Creatine 170 was gradually being administered in small dosages. Troy had been off the drug so long Hayden did not want the renewed regimen to be a shock to Troy's system. The board trusted Hayden and simply asked for frequent updates which he assured them they would have regularly. How he achieved his objective was not their concern.

"I'm going to have to end our little play times soon boy. The suits in charge want to see you fight again. Eager to see you kill and maim and do what it is that you do best. What Falcone has trained you for."

Hayden had ordered a sponge, soap and bucket of bathwater. Today Troy would be taken down from the St Andrews cross. His spirit, mind and body were sufficiently broken.

With his first words, he asked for, “Stavros.”

Hayden was right there. “Stavros? No word, message visit or inquiry I’m afraid. I don’t know why you hold court to a man who is much to self absorbed to care for you or love you properly. We have heard nothing and I have not given up my search for him for he shall indeed pay for his ‘transgressions’. He may be in a far away land for all we know. Now come let’s patch those bruises and cuts. We wouldn’t want folks to think I’ve been abusing you, now would we?” Hayden leaned in to hear Troy’s answer.

Hayden pressed immediately on an open cut to which Troy quickly responded “No, No Sir we don’t” Then he closed his eyes and welcomed sleep.

Hayden lovingly began to wash him down. He administered the first of the series of Creatine 170 shots. Troy would be his old self in no time at all.

Meanwhile in St. Petersburg’s swankiest neighborhood...

“You stupid little no talented slut. You’ll do as you are told, sing what you are told to sing. I won’t tolerate your attitude here do I make myself clear!?” Nicolai slapped Stavros hard and sent him flying across the bedroom.

Rehearsals had been grueling and there had been temperament all around. Nicolai was at his breaking point and he decided to take it out on Stavros.

“You...You’re mad...I don’t take this from no one...I’m leaving”! Stavros pulled his suitcase from the closet and began throwing his clothes randomly into the case.

Nicolai calmed down immediately “Oh my darling, my darling forgive me. It is the stress and the desire to want you to be at your most fabulous best. I didn’t mean to strike you can you ever forgive me?” Nicolai was truly sorry but he also did not want his meal ticket flying back to an unhappy Fabian.

Stavros looked in the mirror, checking to see if there was a bruise. There wasn’t, not yet, it was just reddening. Nicolai stood behind Stavros and lifted his dressing gown and tore away Stavros bathrobe. Then he spit

on his cock and shoved his manhood roughly inside Stavros' tight, furry little butt.

Stavros panted, groaned and pushed back on Nicolai's hardness. In moments he had forgotten about the soreness. As soon as Nicolai shot his load he helped Stavros put his clothes neatly back in place. When he left the room he took Stavros' suitcase with him.

At Prison Falcone...

It was anger, heartbreak and submitting to Warden Pettigrew's deviant sexual desires that fueled his grueling work out daily in the prison gym. Hayden had Troy completely under his control. Weeks of torment had reduced Troy's gentle soul and without his love of Stavros to sustain him he was convinced he had nothing, and was nothing but a killing machine, a trained monkey. The daily doses of Creatine 170 had returned him to hulk like stature. His body was huge and muscled and his reflexes were sharp. The anger inside him made him want to kill anyone in his path.

In the privacy of the prison solitary, Hayden had Troy wear a leash, and a collar of the stiffest leather. He liked controlling Troy who had become his devout slave and sex toy and every session ended with Troy sweating, bleeding and whimpering at Hayden's feet. Hayden would jerk off into Troy's face just before removing the collar. He was a happy man.

St. Petersburg...

"We will be taking the train to Moscow and there you will get accustomed to the magnificence of the Bolshoi. You will see how responsible you are to it and your talent." Nikolai caressed Stavros' shoulders and rubbed them softly then hard.

"Nicolai you are hurting me, please stop." Stavros was becoming increasingly afraid of Nicolai who as the day of the first concert approached became more intent, driven and scared, which manifested itself in their intense love making. The warmth and tenderness had been replaced by brutal thrusts and bruising unseen under clothing.

"Yes, yes the train. 708 kilometers. I remember Nicolai. I have already started to pack." Stavros muttered.

“Good. Now get dressed. Your vocal coach is due here any minute. Your voice must ring out as it never has before!” Nicolai left the room as Stavros lowered his head onto the vanity table. His sobs made his body tremble. He needed Troy.

Falcone...

“Klin is a little town in Russia between St Petersburg and Moscow. There is a training camp there that is the ultimate for ultimate fighters. You’ll take a leave and accompany Troy there. After a couple of weeks you’ll bring him home and then we will book him at least twenty or so fights back to back!”

The head of the board of Falcone Prison had placed unusually large amounts of money on Troy and was taking no chances. The best training camps for athletes were still arguably in Russia, so that’s where his boy was going under the capable hands of Warden Pettigrew.

“Oh and Hayden? Don’t lose him this time. You lose him and you don’t come back. Am I clear?”

Hayden nodded. He had no intention of losing Troy, not now. The risk that he would run away was extremely slim now that the bitch singer was out of the picture. Troy had no one to run to.

The flight to Russia was an uneventful one with Troy handcuffed to Hayden. In first class, Hayden tested his power of Troy by having him orally service him for much of the flight. Troy blindly did as he was told. Once they arrived in Russia, Hayden had booked train seats on the Sobol train system that had failed so dismally in the past but three hundred years later had been resurrected and was now programmed to stop not just in major cities but in the small towns as well.

On the Train...

Troy looked out onto Russia as the panorama zipped past him. For a moment he thought he saw an advertising poster that had the face of Stavros, although it was less than a second. Troy’s heart skipped a beat then returned to normal. Stavros was gone from his life. That much was clear to him.

“Welcome to the Magnetic Levitation Trains! While most trains have been suited for conventional rails, for economical and compatibility reasons, magnetic levitation on rails offers many significant advantages. Above all, where 'conventional' super high speed trains are noisy when running at near full speeds, maglev trains are relatively quiet making their use possible for densely populated areas. Also except for doors and air conditioning, there are no moving parts on the trains which means there are no parts to wear out. Things that speak against maglev are most often its immense cost of infrastructure and the concerns of safety hazards which are not yet known or the super strong electromagnetic fields created to float the train above the rail.” The spokesperson for the line was very cheerful and the video ran repeatedly as Stavros and Nikolai boarded the super fast train to Moscow.

“Should be quite an experience my darling. I hear for the last hundred years this train has astonished those who know about these things. We will be in Moscow in a little over a couple of hours.” Nikolai kissed Stavros on the cheek.

No matter how unhappy Stavros was he would give the performances of his life, he had to or nothing else mattered. No Troy and no career, would certainly have been too much to handle, he could see an after-life of pills and booze.

Hayden had removed Troy's collar, confident of the warrior's loyalty and a confidence that Troy most certainly belonged to him. Recognized immediately as the world's most famous street fighter, wearing a collar would have brought undue attention. The media would certainly ask if Troy's past history of escape had anything to do with the collar. Hayden was ordered to put a spin on the story. He had been given permission to put the blame on a misdiagnosed administration of Creatine. Troy had no desire to leave the system and his highly touted rescuing and subsequent kidnapping of opera star Stavros was simply mixed tales and bad reporting. The collar was removed.

Stavros had been kept away from any media reporting from America but not from the rest of the world. Troy's arrival in Russia had created a media storm especially since it was timed with the much publicized performance by Opera great Stavros himself. Troy didn't follow the media

and normally neither did Stavros. But as he traveled to Moscow he caught a glimpse of the communiqués played on monitors in front of every seat. Stavros stared in disbelief as the monitor repeated the story.

Troy was alive!

Stavros' hands trembled and he glanced at Nicolai who sat next to him reading, oblivious to what was about to happen.

"I'm ...going to the restroom maybe stop by the bar for a drink." Stavros said as he moved into the aisle.

"Darling I can get you anything from the bar. But the restroom I can't help you with. Hurry back." And Nicolai returned to his reading of 'The Great Russian Comic Operas'.

It was impossible for Troy to blend in but most of the passengers had seen enough of him to have moved beyond awestruck and on to curiosity.

"Hayden Sir, I'm going to the bathroom and then stop off at the bar for some health drink if that's ok with you sir." Troy would not have asked ordinarily but he was now Hayden's bitch and he had accepted that fact and there was now no reason to run, and nowhere to run to. Both men were aware of the changed dynamic.

"Sure, just don't be too long. We should be slowing down for Klin soon." Hayden sat back and closed his eyes.

Once in the restroom Stavros splashed his face with cold water. He could not fathom the betrayal. Fabian had lied to him and Nicolai had gone to great lengths to keep the truth from him. Troy was alive. Stavros had been so wrapped up in his own needs, his own career that he hadn't questioned Troy's disappearance. He hadn't even initiated a search. He had left all that to Fabian, meaning that the people he trusted most had played him, used his own weaknesses against him. How could he play the Bolshoi now?

Suddenly the train lurched to the side throwing Stavros against the wall of the washroom. Stunned, he looked into the mirror horrified to see the gash above his eye. Then the train lurched more violently several more times. The train shook as it lurched from side to side. Battered about the bathroom Stavros collapsed unconscious to the floor.

In the cabin cars there was pandemonium, screams of shock and surprise, pain and confusion. Luggage flew about the cabins. Nicolai was thrown from side to side as he struggled to reach the bathroom. Where was Stavros? Slammed against a seat Nicolai lost consciousness almost immediately.

Hundreds of miles away in the computerized control room, technicians frantically set about trying to correct the error that had caused the supersonic train to lose control on the track. Reports were coming in regarding injuries. The train to Klin coming from Moscow would have to be halted as the train into Moscow would be diverted to unload injured passengers.

As the injured train pulled into the station, emergency crews surrounded it as several ambulances blocked the further advancement of the Klin train.

Hayden and Troy glanced out the window intrigued by the chaos.

"I'm going out to help. They need all the able bodies they can get. It's what I was engineered for!" said Troy as he pushed his way passed a startled Hayden.

"Bullshit! You were...dammit you ARE engineered to be a killing machine not save lives boy. YOU take them. Now get your ass back in that seat. Looks like we're going to be here a while. Do some isometrics or something!" Hayden was concerned. He was sure he had bred all the humanity out of Troy. Where had this sudden 'nugget' of humanity come from?

As he made his way through the car Troy could not help but feel some compassion for the wearied faces on the men who attempted to rescue those caught up in the accident. Although it was nothing compared to the sweat, blood and drama on the faces of the victims of the disaster. And then he thought he saw *him*.

It was impossible but he had to be sure. He ran through the train looking for the exit. Seeing his champion break into a run away from him Hayden spoke rapidly into his communicator.

"Lock on stun men. The son of a bitch is trying to make a run for it!" and Hayden set his taser on high stun mode. He'd electrocute the mother

fucker if he tried to escape.

As Troy got onto the platform he searched for the medics and the stretchers. No one tried to stop him as he made his way through the chaos of engineers and personnel mingled in with the wounded. He was big and he was famous and when he found Stavros on the stretcher, rage and sorrow blended with his burst of emotion which came out as an inhuman cry of sheer grief. Those who could, moved away from him as he lifted Stavros into his arms.

Stavros opened his eyes and when he saw Troy he burst into tears "Forgive me, forgive me I didn't know I didn't know!" They were the only words Stavros could muster. The both of them had so much they wanted to say to each other.

"Put him down, Troy. You have work to do. Places to go. Put him down or I'll be forced to taser you...for good!" Hayden's hand was on the trigger.

"You lied to me. You told me he was dead, that he had stopped loving me and he was dead!" Troy's anguish was killing him even as he held his beloved Stavros in his arms.

"I never stopped loving you" Stavros whispered. He had Troy back and he didn't want to lose him, not again.

"We need to get him to the hospital, that's urgent. Let him take Stavros inside the ambulance, once we get him safely into the OR, you can do as you please." The surgeon on call was more interested in saving his patient, and right now he and Troy had the same agenda.

Hayden was aware of the news feeds taping it all. The publicity would be bad for him and Troy if he did the wrong thing now, and that would be bound to affect ticket sales. Despite the killing games the world had become a kinder, gentler, more sentimental place to be. Attacking a man, even a trained killer as he held his dying lover in his arms would not go down well, anywhere.

"OK, take him to the hospital but I swear if you try anything, and I mean ANYTHING you'll truly wish you hadn't," said Hayden as he motioned for his men to lower their tasers. He prayed he would not regret it

but in his gut, he felt that he would. He gave his best man Drew Mercer the job of keeping an eye on Troy.

Once in the hospital room Troy held Stavros' hand, waiting for him to open his eyes again. The tests for suspected brain damage proved unnecessary. Stavros had sustained a mild concussion, had been treated and told to stay overnight but they were sure he'd be fine.

"Doctor, my manager Nicolai Betrevsky, was on the train with me, do you know if he is all right?" Stavros was genuinely concerned. He didn't want the Bolshoi job to be jeopardized. Nicolai was the glue holding that all together.

"I believe he's in intensive care. He received some nasty bumps. He wasn't as lucky as you Mr. Stavros. But the charts show we expect him to make a recovery in a few weeks." The doctor checked his chart, made a few notations and was gone.

Troy locked the hospital room door and drew the shades covering the window. "We don't have a lot of time. Hayden's waiting to take me to the training camp. I don't even know why you're here in Russia. We can talk later, but baby, you have to know I need to make love to you. Now. I need to hold you feel you next to me." Troy began kissing Stavros all over his bruised torso.

Stavros was weak but managed to hold onto Troy and return the love, passion and affection that he also missed.

"I thought you were dead, out of my reach. Fabian kept me from even looking for you" Stavros felt badly about lying, his selfishness began to hit home. He should have tried himself to find Troy, not left it to Fabian who had proved so untrustworthy in the past.

Troy placed his fingers against Stavros' lips, silencing him. "The same for me. When I didn't hear from youI thought the worst. This won't work, Stavros, our love is too tainted, too problematic. It was wrong from the beginning but I couldn't help myself and...." Troy felt his heart trembling inside him. Stavros was his humanity. He couldn't let him go. He was just too important to him.

"It's true but ...we are in love. We have assets. Fabian arranged this. Maybe I can get him to....."

Troy put his fingers once more to Stavros' lips. "My sweet man. Forget it. Hayden would hunt us down. Too many people would gladly see us apart. If it's meant to be it will happen without help from us." Troy removed his clothing and slid naked into the bed alongside Stavros, his full body engulfing the diminutive singer. Stavros clung to Troy eager to fill the giant inside of him. He turned his back to Troy and rubbed his buttocks against Troy's cock, feeling it rapidly gaining strength, girth and size. When Troy slipped his cock into Stavros, Stavros covered his mouth. He kept his gasps and moans to a minimum, not wanting to alert the guards outside the door. As the street fighting, killing machine buried his cock in deep and left his seed inside, Stavros as the singer trembled when he matched Troy's orgasm with his own.

As they lay panting in each other's arms they pulled in closer, their shared body-heat still an intoxicant to them both.

"I'm singing at the Bolshoi in a few days. I can't run away with you this time, so please don't ask. It's too important. To me, to my career. It's not that I don't love you, because you know that I do." Stavros had dreaded having to say these words.

Troy also had been ready. "I understand Stavros, I do. It's ok if I rescue you just so long as it doesn't interfere with your career. Is there nothing more important to you than your career"? He felt his own sense of hopelessness clouding his heart.

"Why do you think I need rescuing? This is my life, my dream. When Nicolai recovers there is no high I can't reach, no star I can't touch. Please try to understand. Loving you would be the greatest thing ever but we have to be realistic. We can't have it all. Only some of it." Stavros wiped a tear from his eye. He had found Troy only to lose him gain.

"Stavros I am training for a major fight now when I am done if I am granted permission, may I come see you? Will you write to me? Will we keep loving each other even when miles apart? Troy knew what he was asking Stavros. Was Stavros willing to do *anything* to keep them together?

"I'll do anything that will help keep us both safe Troy. We aren't going to really be truly happy unless we are doing what we are supposed to be doing which is for me to sing and for you to fight. People count on us. Our

love doesn't amount to much in the greater scheme of things but we can hold onto it in our hearts until that next opportunity to be together again arises.” Stavros thought long and hard. Was he ready to commit to Troy despite the circumstances?

And then Troy put forth an idea he'd been holding onto for a long while. “Stavros if we are married we can see each other often as we'd like, have conjugal rights maybe even adopt. It'll be difficult at first but if we know there are others out there looking out for us then maybe we can make things good come out of it. You think you can still love me in chains? Because if I don't have you I have nothing.” Troy realized his time was running out. Hayden would be demanding his return soon.

Stavros threw his arms around Troy. He wished they could stay like this forever. Marriage would at least keep the jackals off their heels for now and as a married couple they'd have rights they never had before. They could both enjoy rights that had been denied them previously.

“Yes my beautiful Stavros. We could finally be together without worry.” Troy was already thinking of the many conjugal rights he would no longer have to fight for. He was still a convicted killer and a killing machine for corporations, but he'd have some love, and some humanity in his life.

“Yes, Yes. I will marry you!” Stavros blurted out. The publicity could only help the premiere.

A few weeks later...

In the office of Dr. Arensky in the hospital head offices, Hayden Pettigrew smoked his stogie, deep in thought as he listened to the two lovers plot their future. Nicolai's intravenous tubes trembled as he trembled. His beloved Stavros married to this American monster? Not if he could help it. Fabian himself realized that his perfect plan needed revamping to save his friend from what would surely be an unhappy situation. All three men listened to the playback of the video recording, plotting their futures, plotting their strategies. Only one of them was actually planning a wedding.

CHAPEL

Stavros hated Mondays, but weekends always made for fascinating entries into his diary. The rest of the world had switched to electronic blogs centuries ago but Stavros felt pen and paper freed him creatively without intimidation. Electronic blogs were forever, for everyone. His antique book and handmade paper was a one of a kind for his eyes only. He trusted his diary as he trusted no one else. When he entered the final sentence of the current entry, he signed off with a flourish and locked the leather bound diary, and placed it aside under his pillow. He reached for his electronic tablet and switched it on. As the network connected, forceful headlines flashed across the screen and ignited his anger.

Stavros tossed the tablet across the room as he sat upright in bed upsetting his breakfast tray. The disturbance brought the suite's renter, and Stavros' friend Fabian, rushing through the French doors into the bedroom. He was anxious to tend to whatever problem existed, for it would not do to have his divo upset so close to the dates of his performances at the Bolshoi.

When Fabian entered the room he was greeted by a very handsome but dissolved Opera divo. Stavros was near hysterics. Fabian sat beside him on the bed and allowed the music star to rest his head against his shoulder.

"Good Gracious man, what in the world is going on? You've upset your breakfast tray." Fabian had been kind enough to allow Stavros to stay in his hotel suite during his performances at the Bolshoi. He had also included the services of his man servant Mario who was being run ragged by Stavros' many demands. But like everyone who encountered him, Stavros had won him over with his beauty and childlike innocence.

"It's all over the damned Internet!" Stavros whined. When he announced his upcoming marriage to the press, he hadn't thought any of it

through, only the part that directly involved *him* and *his* career. He looked forward to his picture being broadcast all over the world. He foolishly didn't think he would be sharing it with the equally famous Troy Akiro, corporate killer for hire. He was the man Stavros announced as his fiancé.

"What is? What's all over the Internet" Sometime even his best friend Fabian was amazed at how naive and often self centered his friend was. He was entirely at a loss as to why being the biggest news in entertainment today came as a surprise to Stavros, who was the biggest legend of his time when it came to music. Although Stavros loved Troy, the thought of marrying him had come about only as an opportunistic means to an end. It was not his wish to tie himself to a man he could only make love to on supervised visits. He was a passionate man and cock once a month would not satisfy him.

"Oh that. It's old news honey. On the plus side, the publicity has sent your ticket sales through the roof." Fabian couldn't have been happier at the result of the two men's impetuous thoughts. They were star crossed lovers in love from two different worlds. The Romeo and Juliet aspect had not escaped Fabian's sense of showmanship. The romantic union could generate millions in sales. A week later and already the news had moved off of the front pages, but ticket sales to the events of both personages were selling out rapidly.

"Are you saying my name alone isn't enough to generate big sales? That's not what you told me when you booked me into this godforsaken place." Stavros was reluctant to pay any compliment to Fabian. He had yet to fully forgive his old friend for his well meant but nearly fatal betrayal of him. Yet he was grateful to the man who had guided him to major successes in the past, and while of late his popularity had waned, Fabian had put his name back in illustrious lights, both home and abroad.

"Uh...sweetie. The Russian Bolshoi is hardly a god forsaken place. You might as well get used to the idea that at the moment your public recognition factor is higher than it's ever been. It is thanks to your genetically mutated boyfriend and your impending nuptials. The world loves a challenging romantic pairing. And of the course the more unlikely the union, the better." Fabian recognized the union as a mismatched opportunity, a novelty act that the public would soon grow tired of. Fabian

knew this was a money train that had to be boarded immediately while still in the station.

“Damn. Am I that naive? Sure I thought it would generate a bit of publicity. But this news is everywhere.” Reality checks had always been difficult for Stavros. Since he had discovered his voice at an early age, friends and family had nurtured and spoiled him. As he grew older the world had followed suit. Fame, fortune and worldwide adulation had been swift and steady until it didn’t anymore. Stavros refused to realize that things had changed. Every year, month, or week produced newer and younger talent on the musical stage. Stavros believed that all that was required of him was to keep himself in good voice. He recorded all of these thoughts in his dairy. Careful to conceal his writings, he had reason to believe that his extreme narcissism would remain between him and the pages of his diary.

“That’s right. You cannot buy this kind of publicity! And from what I’m hearing, your soon to be husband’s box office is also soaring in sales. You do know that once your coffers are joined those receipts will be yours. He will still be in prison while you spend your life rolling in luxury with only the cost of a conjugal visit or two. Truth is you have no reason whatsoever to be tossing my expensive china around this room in which you’re a guest!”

“You invited me and I’m your best client and your my dearest...friend. I say that hesitantly since it is partially your fault that my husband is back in prison!” Stavros didn’t want to anyone, especially Fabian, to know that he may have been somewhat grateful to Fabian’s intervention in his affairs. Stavros had been moved by passion and lust. He owed Fabian a debt by his own accounting. Yet he could not help himself. To align his life with this man more than necessary would be a mistake, but one he could not wrestle himself a way from. Had he not discovered reason at the last minute, he would have followed Troy into running and hiding. Instead he did the next best thing. He promised he would come back for him, as his life partner.

“For your own safety you should be thanking me. Now my darling I’ll get Mario to clean up this mess while you get ready to bathe and meet your public.” Fabian was anxious to drop the subject of Troy. The less said, the better. Right now it was a distraction even though he knew the press was

going to bombard Stavros with questions about the whole mess. He intended to cross that bridge when he got to it. Right now he knew there was plenty of work to do. Right now he needed something to take Stavros' mind off the work ahead and to relax him. Fabian knew exactly what to do. Preparing the world famous Chapel for the wedding of the decade would take much planning.

He opened the bedroom door to here where Mario was waiting. He had been instructed to stand outside until he was called. Fabian called him into the bedroom.

"After you've cleaned up this mess Mario, your time is your own. Spend it wisely." He smiled at Mario who was clear on the intent.

Fabian closed the bedroom doors behind him. It had been his intention to keep Stavros and Troy as far apart as possible. He underestimated the reach of Falcone Prison which orbited over the earth but at this moment was orbiting directly over Russia. Fabian also underestimated Warden Haydan's desire to monitor the union of Troy and Stavros, which he had taken to referring to in the press as the 'situation'.

Fabian silenced his ringtone as he read an incoming text. He shut it abruptly. He had been summoned to Falcone prison. He didn't feel he had the time to spare but he realized ignoring a call from the Warden may prove fool hardy at best. He listened at the bedroom door. Stavros and Mario would not miss him for the next few hours. He hurried to prepare. If he hurried he could make the next shuttle in time to board it to Falcone Prison.

Falcone is the three mile impenetrable mobile prison that presently orbited above Russia. The only way on and the only way off the prison island is by plane, or hovercrafts. It is kept airborne by state of the art space age technology that has kept the prison technically evolving even while orbiting. Falcone serves as a multi-factional facility, housing pickpockets and white crime in one section, dope dealers, rapists, sex criminals and killers in another section. Their units are housed separately, keeping the various factions apart to protect the less carnivorous of the human species.

Falcone is also the home of a very high government research lab headed by Dr. Quentin Sarasota, the creator of the Creatine 170 vaccine, the vaccine that turned men into monster killing machines. Hardware based

Security is kept at a minimum since guns or fire power no longer exist and the prisoners can only escape if they were to sprout wings. Because of its size and its space station status, the prison has government sanctioned jurisdiction over the planet. It is the ultimate prison. The inmates injected with Creatine 170 take on the mantle of entire mankind's need for aggression and drama. The chemically created monsters fight in the arena aboard the ship the size of a football field where they are trained like gladiators of the coliseum to kill their opponents. This was the facility that housed Troy and Fabian was on his way to meet the Warden.

Falcone Prison Gym

Haydan stood in the far corner of the gym and watched Troy defeat every body building machine thrown at him. He had mastered all of the higher settings. Haydan made a mental note to order higher grade machines designed to do more than just maintain Troy's strength and agility. Being a super human had its drawbacks. Creatine had blessed him but raw emotion held him in check. Haydan had yet to decide whether the emotional failsafe was a good way to control Troy or would other methods prove more advantageous. Time would tell. He slapped the baton against his hand alerting everyone of his presence.

Troy looked up from his weights. They weren't challenging but they helped him to think of other things besides separating Haydan's head from his body. The challenge now was to increase his power and his focus. Haydan tortured Troy for the pleasure it gave him while Troy played along, acting as though he were hurt or injured. It was a psychological game that he played with Haydan to keep the tenuous peace between them and intimidate others who sought to challenge Haydan's authority. In exchange Troy was given privileges.

"Not now Haydan. I'm working." Troy blew off Haydan knowing that nothing was more important to Haydan than winning. Especially in the coliseum where money ruled. Haydan ignored the slight and pressed onward.

"Look at you. You're a magnificent specimen, a man to be feared and yet you let some skank of an opera singer bring you to knees. You know he's making a pussy of you, this little prima donna. He has already shown his love for you by tossing you to the wolves more than once." Haydan

disliked docile soft men who controlled through their tears. Stavros had taken passive aggressive to new heights. He had Troy wrapped around his finger. Haydan's problem was that Stavros was distracting. Troy made poor choices, bad decisions. Decisions that could injure him in the arena. Injury was distracting. Distractions cost.

"You aren't fooling me Haydan. Your cock also hardens at the thought of having my Stavros' beautiful derriere at *your* beck and call. You would love for him to be there for your pleasure as he is for mine. Nothing would please you more than having his very talented throat filled with your cock. This is not about the arena." Haydan winced at Troy's words and vowed he'd not forget them when they were alone. Yes, he would very much like to have Stavros in his bed but only to hurt him. He wanted to make him cry out. Controlling such beauty, ever so fragile, had to be the most powerful thing in the world.

"Is the side effect of Creatine 170 now to include the shrinking or loss of your balls?" Haydan kept hammering away at Troy. He could try and dissuade Troy from Stavros. He knew that mere words would not break these lovebirds apart, but would serve to bring them closer together. He'd need something stronger, more lasting and above all, effective. He needed to injure Troy emotionally but not physically. He had already seen how Stavros held the key to that strategy. Haydan believed he may have finally found the solution.

"What kind of life could you offer a man like Stavros? He's a candy assed party favor with a decent voice and the vanity of a demigod. I would have thought your passions would have run more to someone like me perhaps?" Haydan waited for Troy's reaction. Watching the giant slow burn always got Haydan's dick hard. The key to controlling Troy was to get *under* his skin. Haydan wanted to get into Troy's head emotionally and that is where he would have Troy by the balls.

"You're a sadistic brute Warden Haydan. I would no sooner willingly submit to you than any other of your forced harem of young inmates." Troy controlled his anger. Nothing would be gained by show of temper. He knew nothing would please Haydan more than to get him excited, and bring his blood pressure up which in turn would release the beast. Troy could kill

Haydan with one blow but that would mean his end by lethal injection for sure. Who would watch over his beloved Stavros then?

“I just think you’d prefer me over that little girl you’re planning on hitching your rather limited wagon to! Our little games notwithstanding, we do produce some interesting tension between us, yes? What kind of loser would want to be married to you anyhow? It’s not like you have a future outside these walls. At least with me we’d be together till one of us expires first.” Haydan stopped to consider his own words, never before voiced.

“And I’ve seen that little skank in action. You don’t think he’s going to be happy with one or two conjugal visits a month do you? If this is a stunt to publicize and re-energize both your fading careers *that* I would understand.” Haydan felt like maybe he had stumbled onto something. He could practically see the wheels in Troy’s head turning, thinking about what he had to say. Then suddenly Troy bolted to his feet and shouted as he grabbed Haydan's neck and lifted him from the floor.

“ENOUGH!” Troy’s voice reverberated off the walls as Haydan gasped in surprise. He dropped his baton as both hands flew to his throat.

“Put me down you ape! Put me down or I’ll see that your princess dies alongside of you!” Haydan wasn’t used to making idle threats. Troy released him for that reason alone.

“You forget yourself boy.” Haydan gasped out. His throat was going to be quite raw in the next few days. This just made him all the more desperate to seek a solution to his problem. If he could get to Troy so easily and quickly, his opponents in the ring would find that very weakness and twist the knife in until he bled real blood.

“We’ve been through a lot and we’ve survived. No one wants to see us happy. I know you want him and Fabian wants him, but he belongs to me! Nothing will make that clearer than when we leave the Chapel as husband and spouse.” Troy had regained his composure and meant every word he said. He had come to the same conclusion the Warden had. He had to keep control. He couldn’t afford to let others see him appear to be weak. A major side effect of Creatine 170 was developed to kill emotional control and sentiment. Troy wasn’t just fighting himself and Haydan but the effects of the Creatine 170 to keep his love of Stavros alive, and to flourish.

“The Chapel? Your getting hitched in the Chapel? Only the most prestigious and holy place in the world? Really? How may I ask, did you swing that. I didn’t think the Pope was a fan of killers and cutthroats.” Haydan laughed but he was in awe.

Only people of great wealth or influence were united under the blessings of The Chapel. The institution of the Chapel was the last final place where all religions flourished under one Pope. Most of the world had turned to science while others chose to hold onto their faith and to share its tenets among other religions.

The ceremonies of the Chapel covered every existing religion allowing it to maintain its integrity. Any disagreements and the offending religions were declared criminal and wiped off the face of the earth. Only the crusades could rival its brutalities. The system worked and all religions coexisted under the auspices of the Pope and mutual coexistence.

If the two lovers had the blessings of those in real power it would make Haydan’s job all that much harder. He glanced at his watch, time passed quickly but not quickly enough to suit him.

“He isn’t, but he’s a huge opera fan and therefore a big fan of Stavros. And between us I believe he may wager a bit of currency for the outcome of coliseum events as well. I’m just saying, I don’t know.” Choosing to focus on his workout, Troy failed to notice that Warden Pettigrew had circled around to stand behind him until he felt the bulging throb of Haydan’s cock pressed against his backside.

“Will wonders never cease how your following grows every day. I guess I better get while the gettin’ is good. Your ass is looking better every day, if that’s possible.” Haydan squeezed Troy’s hard muscular buttocks. Troy instinctively clenched his buttocks, coaxing a barely audible gasp from Haydan. The only real humiliation Haydan could offer Troy was to take him like a boy, lean him over, lower his shorts and fuck him hard in the eyes of the other men. That of course would be the straw that would break Troy’s back.

“Follow me to my office boy. Daddy needs his knob polished.” Haydan whacked the baton against Troy’s backside barely in view of the other prisoners.

“Please Haydan, in honor of my upcoming nuptials, let me be.” Troy appreciated Haydan not humiliating him in front of the other prisoners but he knew even that small kindness would have its price.

“You know I care absolutely nothing for your upcoming nuptials. Despite all I say to the contrary I barely care about you except for your ability to make me a richer man. I am not however blind to your sweet ass.” It was the one thing Haydan said that truly came from his heart.

Warden Haydan Pettigrew’s Office

“Mr. Fabian, I am so glad you answered my call. I know that like me you are a busy man, so let me get right to the point. I think we may be of some service to each other.” It galled Haydan to have to call upon this preening peacock, this man who had shown himself to be a man of even lesser integrity than he. However he believed he may have found an ally.

“Haydan, you’re a monster. What on earth could we be possibly do for each other besides stay out of each other’s way?” Fabian was afraid of the Warden. Haydan possessed power and he could make life difficult for Fabian if he so chose to cross the warden again, as he had in the past. Fabian had answered Haydan’s call because he still expected the man to bring him up on obstruction of justice charges from when he hid the wanted lovers from the police.

“Yes, I remember you being sort of...how do I say this in a way as not to offend? You have been a bit of a bitch. You seem to be forgetting that there is still the little business of your leading me on a wild goose chase and aiding and abetting a person of interest. Namely your friend Stavros Constantin.” Haydan was perceptive when it came to reading faces and body language. Fabian’s abrupt change in demeanor told Haydan that Fabian hadn’t forgotten his obligation to Haydan either. Not at all.

“I already explained it to the authorities to their satisfaction.” Replied Fabian who squirmed in his chair uncomfortably. He wondered when he was ever going to get out from under *that* cloud. He wanted these concerts with Stavros to happen so he could earn his ten percent. He had also placed a bet on the outcome of a series of bouts featuring Troy. Why did he have to be so fond of the almighty currency?

“Perhaps. But not to my satisfaction. And as far as the law goes, it’s really me you have to convince. But again I’m distracted. That’s not why I asked you here. You see, I *could* pursue charges against you. I may or may not be able to prove the charges but I can slow you down. I can cost you plenty of money by exerting my influence, hinting at trouble down the way regarding the authorities. No one will want to bankroll your many other artsy fartsy little projects then, of that I am certain. I could have my colleagues shut down your series of performances featuring the blushing spouse.” Haydan was confident in his approach but he was bluffing.

He had little power and virtually no say in anything that went on regarding criminal activities outside his jurisdiction, at least until he was in orbit around the area in question and that would last only a few hours. He merely hoped he could at least give Fabian some thoughts to consider, be they valid or not.

“Don’t call him that! “ Fabian was annoyed to the point of distraction. He was getting bored listening to this little man speak of powers he did not have. Empty threats were a waste of his time as well as an insult to his intelligence. He was a minor nuisance at best but he could become a roadblock if he kept insinuating himself into places he had no business. However, It was probably prudent for the moment for Fabian to listen to what the man had to say.

“Um, I touched a nerve I see. Good. That brings me to why I asked you here today. I take it you didn't mention this little tryst to Stavros?” Fabian pulled out a cigarette. If he had to inhale Haydan’s cigar smoke then Haydan could well enjoy a little second hand emphysema from Fabian. Haydan hated the smell of cigarettes which is why he started smoking cigars. Cigarettes had been eradicated over a hundred years ago but they made a stunning return once scientists had found the cancer cure. Ironically there were no lasting cures for addictive behaviors.

“Of course not. He wouldn’t believe me anyway. He hates you as much as any one of us do. With good cause I might add.” Fabian was already regretting answering Haydan’s phone call. Rehashing old bad news was not the way he wanted to spend his afternoon.

“Yes Yes, but my warm personality aside. I see you don’t want this wedding to take place anymore than I do. As I said before, perhaps we can

do something for each other.” Haydan wasn’t sure why Fabian didn’t want this marriage to happen. Although instincts and a few guesses were enough for him to attempt to enlist his aid. Perhaps a little digging and touching on hot spots might reveal little known facts. He was fishing but he had to try.

“I’m listening.” Control of his two greatest loves was really at the root of Fabian’s interest. Stavros’ estate and Stavros’ love and undying devotion. Anything that took him even an inch away from Stavros’ orbit was anathema to Fabian. If this repulsive man in front of him could remove the threat then it was worth a listen.

“I’m going to do everything I can to see that this travesty never comes to pass. But I’m going to need your help to do it. I’m going to need you to help me find a way to tear these two apart. Not just by killing the wedding either.” The wedding was the symptom, tearing them permanently apart would end the cause. Haydan was pleased when he saw Fabian nodding in agreement.

“If I recall, killing isn't out of, shall we say your range of expertise?” Fabian was aware of the possibilities. He didn’t want anyone to lose his life but he did want Haydan to realize that no options were completely off the table.

“It isn’t. But this is going to need a finer hand. For reasons of my own I don’t want Troy to hate me anymore than he already does. We can work together here and no one would ever be the wiser.” Haydan thought, *what a stupid bitch*.

Even if killing the lovers were an option, he would never admit to it. Certainly not to this arrogant sycophant. The comment however, let Haydan know just how desperate Fabian was to stop the ceremony. Fabian had all the money in the world so it would have to be another force strong enough to entertain death as an alternative.

“And you want me to deliver Stavros into your open arms?” For Fabian the conversation was fast drawing to a close. He had come to hear Haydan out and hear him out he did. Mostly fishing, flexing muscle and empty threats. Fabian would have to think over Haydan’s proposal (of nothing) and think what he could do to help them both out. Having Haydan as an ally certainly was better than having him as an enemy.

“I’ll admit, I am not exactly sure what it is that you can do, but two heads are better than one. The only catch is, it has to be one or both of them that cancels the wedding with no apparent outside influences. If they suspected our fine hand involved they’d marry to spite us they hate us so much. We both have classic love hate relationships.” Haydan took his seat behind his desk. It was his signal that the conversation was close to an end.

“You mean they hate YOU so much!” Fabian knew Haydan was right, so no response was necessary. Haydan took it a step further.

“Perhaps I ought to have a talk with the both of them and explain to them the extent of your involvement in Troy’s capture. I take it that there will be enough hate to go around. What do you think?” OK bitch you can go now. I’ve made my point and told you what I want. Now go heat up your witches kettle and give me what I need. Haydan’s thoughts were more than transparent. Fabian didn’t need to hear the words spoken out loud. He put out his cigarette and stood in preparation to be on his way. The office air was stuffy in more ways than one.

“OK, OK, I get your point. Let me work on this, see what I can come up with.” Already Fabian was thinking of what he could possibly do to further gum up the works for the two men in love.

“All I need is the assurance that we are on the same side. I wanted to be sure that I’d have your cooperation. We are running out of time so... Anyway Mr. Fabian, it has been a pleasure. I’ll have my guards escort you back to the hovercraft. Have a safe journey back to Earth. I am sure I don’t need to tell you that this meeting never happened. We wouldn’t want the love birds to think we are anything less than thrilled at their upcoming march down the aisle at Chapel.” Haydan’s smiled broadly. He had perfect even teeth that looked like those of a jackal. Sharp, very sharp.

“Yes Warden. Understood. I’ll get back to you when I have something...” Fabian mumbled under his breath unsure of where to start in implementing a plan. He was moving toward the door as he backed away from Haydan. He wasn’t about to turn his back to this man. His survival instincts were very much intact.

“By the way Mr. Fabian I understand the wedding is a few weeks away?” Haydan was anxious to move. He wanted to have a plan to set in

motion and he wanted it now.

“Tabloid press Haydan. Pay it no mind.” Fabian sighed with relief as he hurried to the loading dock. Mention of the press gave him an idea. He decided he may have a plan in mind after all. One that could involve the press and keep his own hands clean. All he had to do was to fashion such a plan.

Fabian’s Suite

“So close to your wedding and here you are covered in the sweat of another man.” Fabian tore off his jacket and tossed it aside and moved to sit beside Stavros on the bed where the singer was still bathed in afterglow. Mario, the houseman had plowed his butt hard and long and had proved to be the perfect lover to help Stavros to momentarily forget Troy.

“Not just any man. He is Mario, the Italian stallion. Troy wants my happiness. If he were here he’d toss me into Mario’s arms himself if he thought it would make me happy.” Stavros leaned back into the plumped up pillows that supported him against the headboard. He closed his eyes in an attempt to prolong the rapturous memory of Mario delivering his sperm load deep inside him. Stavros loved Troy as much as he could but his passions ran deep and he had no tolerance for *building* on a relationship, preferring to leave it alone to flourish on its own.

“I Thought Troy was your man? The one man who you claimed could so totally satisfy you. Is he in your head right now? Is he in your heart? Are you telling me that you have misrepresented yourself? Or to the great man himself? No marriage can survive when it is built on lies, Stavros.” Fabian appeared to be teasing his friend, but both men recognized the element of truth in the statement.

Stavros and Fabian had talked long into many nights regarding the relationship between Troy and Stavros. The love between the two men was rough at best. It was not a romantic love but one built on need, desire, ego and the need to have someone in their lives whom they would claim as exclusively theirs as they grew older.

“Then you will tell Troy all about your passionate hours under Mario's strong body? Wrapped in Mario’s strong arms?” Fabian had many times been

in Stavros' place. Mario was indeed the man to help one forget about anything else but the man himself.

"It will be a secret that I share only with you my best friend and with my diary. I tell my diary everything. You have betrayed my trust once Fabian. I warn you not to go against me again or you will regret it!" Stavros had been a loner for much of his young life. Every friend he had was either dead or had moved on.

He had lost his parents while still young, when they had only begun to see the fame and fortune his voice had granted him. When he discovered the leather bound diary in a street market he felt the pull of its blank pages. His life was to be inscribed inside. The written word not copied but exchanged. His diary was the friend he had not discovered in life so he cherished it as his most valued possession. He didn't trust Fabian to keep his confidences as secure as his locked diary.

"You always doubt me. Haven't I done my best to make up for past mistakes. I'm making you a rich man, for god's sake. Doesn't that count for anything?" Fabian was injured. He had loved Stavros for years and did his best to look after his friend. He carried his love for Stavros close to his heart and only once many years ago had he made his intentions clear, only to be shot down. He never bared his soul again, but he vowed to protect the Greek in every way he could and that meant protecting him from men less worthy of him. Troy was not worthy of anything other than to shed blood in the arena.

"I've learned the hard way coming up through the ranks that the only one you can trust is yourself. Simon is the name I have given my diary. To show you how much I trust you, I shall introduce you. Meet Simon." Stavros produced the diary from beneath the covers and tossed the leather bound volume into the hands of Fabian who caught it easily.

He turned the volume over in his hands and opened it. He skimmed quickly through the pages. The secrets revealed within struck Fabian with surprise. He read rapidly and then closed the book. When he was done he sat silently absorbing what he had just been privy to.

"You have spoken of many personal things in this record of your days. If the press ever got hold of this..." Fabian could not believe the gift he just

been given. Inside the diary Stavros went into intimate detail of every emotion that he had ever felt. He detailed how his flesh goose-bumped every time Troy touched him. Yet he could not hold back on the accolades awarded to Mario and the way he transcended Troy's techniques of bringing him to orgasm several times in a short amount of time. His praise of Mario was more than generous.

"Exactly. I keep it in the safe behind the closet. You recall the safe you granted me access to upon my arrival here? It holds all of my valuables. Simon here is one of my most valuable possessions," He said slyly.

"We don't need to discuss this anymore. What of our plans to prepare the Chapel for the big day?" Stavros was prepared to forget the topic of Simon and move on to the business of the Chapel. He planned to sing at his own wedding. He would marry the man he loved and his fairy tale wedding would inspire everyone. His nuptials were all that mattered to him now. His performance at the Bolshoi would pale in comparison to the spectacle his wedding would present to the world.

Moments later alone in his study Fabian was finishing up a call that he had placed.

"Yes. I think we need to speak of our mutual ambition. I'm on my way." Fabian dressed rapidly. If he hurried he would be able to reach Haydan in time for the final shuttle of the day. Haydan showed great excitement over the phone. He had not expected his plans to bear fruit so quickly. He awaited Fabian's arrival.

The Arena

The arena was full and the crowd was hungry for blood and entertainment. Troy was a crowd favorite. He was famous and had a reputation for delivering the goods when it came to besting his opponents. He delivered the blows hard against his opponent. With each thrust of his weapon he produced blood and wounds and the crowd cheered his assaults as if they had delivered the blows themselves. His opponent landed several blows against Troy but not as crippling as the blows he received in return. As his opponent stepped back to avoid more punishment from Troy he misstepped and tumbled onto the ground. The spear fashioned from metals melted down from former weapons of destruction flew from Troy's grasp

and struck his opponent in the base of his throat. The blood gushed outwardly, spraying Troy with his blood. The crowd leaped to their feet, displaying their approval. Troy raised his fists in triumphant glory. He left the arena to the roar of the crowd.

“And again I grow richer and prouder with you as my gladiator. You fight so fucking well. You are indeed a warrior worth my time, worth my attention, and worth owning. I shall not share even one percent of you with that...that singer!” Haydan was never more determined and sure of himself than he was when the crowd roared their approval. They would give their all toward Troy’s victory, especially when he covered them in blood.

“I need only refuse to fight and win, Haydan, to have Stavros by me.” Troy was tired of fighting to live. He was not fighting for freedom only for his right to have access to the love of his life. He had nothing to lose to win or to cherish, only his Stavros, which made life more beautiful to him. it made the ugly things in life seem far away.

“Really? You would risk everything including your beloved Stavros? To what end?” Haydan was perplexed. As a convicted killer Troy had no future to work toward. Did Troy find so much in the arms of Stavros? Did he find sole sustenance between Stavros legs? Haydan’s curiosity was piqued. Stavros was handsome and talented, but what else there was, Haydan could not discern.

“Emotional relief is what Stavros gives me. What little Creatine 170 has left me in terms of my humanity I have found in Stavros. He has my heart. He is my heart. He is everything good and noble that I have lost because of you and Creatine.” Troy struggled between his soul in the arena and his heart with Stavros. Finally he felt that his heart and soul would be united.

Haydan grew tired of Troy’s cheap sentiments. He was pleased to see his appointment had arrived. Fabian waited for him in his office. The conversation was brief and instructions were simple.

“Simply give this journal to Troy. The rest should take care of itself. I believe we will have the results that we are looking for.” Fabian looked for an ashtray on Haydan’s desk. Seeing none he quickly put out his cigarette on the concrete floor, crushing it beneath his boot. Haydan held the diary in

his hands. Unlocked, the book fell open easily and he quickly read through the pages that Fabian especially ear marked for him to read. He smiled at Fabian who awaited his response.

Haydan read Stavros' diary with interest. There was more than enough material contained in it to put the men's wedding plans on hold. All he had to do now would be to get the diary into Troy's hands.

Haydan entered Troy's cell and watched as Troy covered his flesh with cortisone and Ben Gay. Haydan tossed the book on the bed and waited for Troy to notice the diary and open it. Troy looked startled as if he recognized the leather bound journal.

"I wanted to keep this from you but it was sent to me anonymously. I think a member of the press must have found it and forwarded it to me for comment." Haydan replied.

"What is this? I recognize this...it belongs to Stavros... you say it has come to you anonymously?" Troy fingered the book with interest. He was familiar with it, he had seen the book before. He recognized it as Stavros diary. He opened the book and began to read with intent and purpose the pages that were earmarked. Unfortunately the more he read the more he lost check of his emotions.

"Read it....aloud why don't you? " Haydan goaded him as he clearly looked forward to the outcome.

Dear Simon, my god I am still giddy with drink and the aftermath of the most fantastic fuck I have ever experienced, well, since the last time Mario lay between my legs. His cock is magnificent and he uses it as a man who loves other men as romantic equals. Unlike Troy who takes me as he would any goat or sheep. Troy pounds me hard and relentlessly until I am exhausted but not elated. Mario's mouth begins to tease and brings me to the edge of madness. While Troy does not honor me as such he is quick to pound my throat so hard and deep I often gag and regurgitate. I must admit that sometimes Troy's lovemaking or his method of sex leaves me hungry to be so used and abused by such a man of power and who has taken the life of so many. Having those hands around my throat admittedly is exciting and does get my dick hard but it is Mario's tender hand that moves me to love him. Completely investing in him all my heart and emotion. When Mario is

inside me Troy could be no further from my thoughts than if he were on the moon. I cannot have Troy inside me and not think Mario, Mario, MARIO!!

Troy howled like a dog at the moon. His plaintive cry became louder and more heartfelt. Such cries come not from the heart but from a place of severe emotional pain. When he was spent enough to speak, he directed his words toward Haydan.

“I can’t believe this. Even with the evidence in my hands. But it is in his own handwriting. I would know it anywhere. Who is this Mario? Let me read this again. Then I will have you bring me Stavros if you will not see me break into an unrelenting flood of self pitying tears.” Haydan smiled. Haydan would do as Troy requested only because it was in his best interest to see the outcome of such a meeting.

Back at the hotel, Stavros looked for his friend and confident, Simon.

“My diary, where is it? Where is it?! Where is it?” Fabian helped Stavros to search for the missing diary. His help proved fruitless. However his gift of the diary to Haydan had already produced results. Within an hour Stavros was persuaded to accompany Fabian to Falcone Prison.

“How wonderful to see you again Mr. Constantin. I must admit our last meeting was a little stressed.” Haydan extended his hand to Stavros but was ignored. A move that made Haydan raise an eyebrow in response but choose not to comment on.

“I requested that Mr Fabian bring you with him on this visit. See this random visit as my early wedding gift to you and Troy, one of many I think?” Haydan allowed himself one conciliatory gesture toward Stavros before he shattered his world.

“I am a little confused and curious otherwise I would not be here. May I ask what is your business with Fabian?” Stavros had suffered before because of Fabian’s ‘good intentions’. He was not anxious to experience such a lapse in judgment again. The missing diary still weighed heavily on his mind.

“Just tying up some loose ends surrounding your kidnapping and the possibility of an obstruction of justice charge. But that is not why you are here. Troy has requested a visit with you. Again consider it my premature

blessing on your union. Come.” Haydan led Stavros into a room the prison had reserved for conjugal visits.

“Please allow the guards to tend to any and all of your comforts during your visit here. I shall tend to my business with Mr. Fabian while you enjoy your visit with Troy. By the way do you still intend to have your ceremony in the Chapel?” Haydan looked forward to savoring Stavros’ uninformed yet smug response. He would savor the memory in his next meeting with Stavros where things will be certain to have changed.

“I will speak with my beloved Troy. After you have made that happen you will have your answer.” Stavros’ eyes momentarily met Haydan’s scrutiny before looking away. He felt uncomfortable but superior in Haydan’s presence.

“Then I will take my leave and send my man to you, I mean your man.” Haydan turned his back to Stavros and paused behind the door. He waited for more words from Stavros but none came. Haydan continued on, closing the door behind him, content with the sound of locks falling into place.

Stavros’ spirit and demeanor visibly lifted upon Troy’s arrival. He reached to embrace his lover but was kept at a distance. Something was wrong. He sensed it immediately. He sought to discover the reason.

“It’s hard for me to wait for you to be allowed to call for me. It is sometime hard to be your beloved, my sweet,” Stavros spoke softly. Whatever was amiss, he was suddenly reluctant to explore it.

Troy was silent as he sat down next to Stavros. They did not touch. He produced the diary and handed it to Stavros. No words were exchanged, only looks between two men, both greatly disappointed with their current state.

Troy spoke first.

“I cannot believe that you have betrayed me. You may give of your body, but your mind, your heart, and your emotions were to be mine and mine alone. Not only have you shared these things but through the admissions written by your own hand in this damned diary, you have cuckolded me before the world.” Having rehearsed his speech over in his

head, he was not prepared to hear them aloud. He body trembled from the impact of his own words. Stavros felt the impact as well.

“Certainly it is not my intent to embarrass either of us. I have needs Troy, we discussed this before. Once or twice a month at Haydan’s whim is not a life that I look forward to. I can deal with it but only out of my love for you. I don’t want you to live out your life sentence in Falcone Prison alone without hope. I can give you that hope by keeping love alive in both our hearts. That is my intention.” Stavros tried to recall what words he had written in his diary so he could address the tone and correct the words to suit Troy. He was drawing a blank.

“While you build a life with Mario with me on the side as your husband? The man who would inflame your passions but not your heart? I cannot submit to such a union. I don’t have a say in this. The Creatine inflames my ego and programs me not to accept such an arrangement.” Stavros reacted as if he had been physically struck. He would punish Fabian for this. Who else had access to his diary?

“My darling I have offended you and it was not my intention. After the wedding, after we are married I will prove my fidelity to you in every way, both private and gloriously in public. In the diary are mere words written in the afterglow of shooting my load. Anyone would understand such a lapse in judgment of putting such words to paper.”

“You speak of words while I speak of blood, and soul. Marriage? A Wedding ceremony? No Stavros. As much as it pains me, it would seem that everyone is right. The odds makers are right. This union stands no chance. You are just so full of life. No Stavros, I cannot take that away from you. As much as it pains me, the wedding is off. I cannot marry you.”

Haydan’s Office

“I do believe our business here is concluded.” Said Haydan as he rested his feet on his desk. He imagined the lovebirds would be canceling their nuptials even as he spoke of them. As intended he had closed the book on Fabian’s involvement and would wash his hands of him and his beloved peacock client. In an hour’s time his final assurances would come from the lips of Fabian himself.

“As of an hour ago I anticipated the changes. The Chapel is no longer available and the lovers have been torn apart. This time for good!” Fabian lit his cigarette and leaned back. He had done his job. He had partnered with the devil and the outcome had been to answer the wishes of the schemers.

No doubt Stavros would be inconsolable as he did truly love Troy. He loved him very much, as much as he could love anyone that was not himself. Troy would be resigned to his fate as he had been since his arrival in Falcone so many years ago. His love for Stavros would in time fade. Fabian had been given false hope before. He had been led down this path before. He had to be sure that he would not have to do this again. He had to be sure that the lovers were indeed and truly finished. He would think of a plan to ensure that the union was truly over.....for good this time.

VALENTINE’S DAY

New York City 2300 AD was more excited than it had been in a long time The Falcone Games had chosen New York as the site of its famous Coliseum games. It had been a long time since the city had been so honored. Mayor Bernard Ramses and his teenage son Tyger sat in the back seat of the chauffeured Bentley. Mayor Ramses was an old college chum of Warden Hayden Pettigrew, the sponsor of the games. They had been friendly rivals for much of their adult and academic lives and had maintained that status for many years.

It was in the Mayor’s personal interest to see that the games went off without a hitch. This was an election year. He had been willing to bend over backwards to give his constituents everything the polls indicated that they wanted. Ramses did not want the games in his city. When the orbiting Falcone prison passed over New York, he demanded a news blackout. He did not want to draw attention to its presence. When it was obvious that the public wanted the games he pretended as if it was his idea all along and even made amendments to make the games more interesting. He briefly recalled his meeting with Warden Hayden Pettigrew.

“Good of you to come Hayden. Long time no see.” The Mayor hadn’t seen his college nemesis in years. He looked fit, in shape. The Mayor felt a familiar stirring just seeing the man again.

“Ramses, it is good to see you of course. Of course I remember our promise to stay out of each other way. What changed?” As Hayden smiled he did not fail to notice the blush in Ramses cheeks. Nothing had changed between them.

“Come on Hayden, let bygones be bygones. We’re both successful and in positions to do each other some good.” Ramses thought back to that drunken night when he seduced Hayden. When the two drunk men collided sexually Hayden won out and despite Ramses’ change of mood and mind, Hayden held him down and took firm advantage of the smaller man. He took advantage of him for most of the night.

“Really? What do you have in mind?” Hayden had regretted raping his college dorm mate, but what was done was done. The day following the attack they barely spoke to each other. Ramses was the romantic but Hayden proved to be brutish and he wanted only one thing from Ramses.

“I’ll grant the permits that will allow you to have your Falcone games in New York’s air space. With the right promotion, it should be the event of the year.” After graduation they had parted ways. Ramses wanted more but Hayden made it clear he was moving on and it might be in both of their interest if they would forget about what had transpired between them “Till next time.” Hayden’s flashback ended. He knew that for Ramses to have called him it must be important. He leaned forward eager to hear him out.

“Yes. Till next time. For two to three hundred years firearms have been banned leaving a large metal surplus. Each state in the union has its own stockpile and no state has come up with a viable solution, until now. As New York’s mayor, I may have stumbled onto a solution. I’m going to need your help to promote it.” It had come to Ramses in the middle of the night. He wanted to distinguish himself from the rest of his family. He wanted to go down as the best Mayor New York had ever had and he wanted a legacy that would put him above the rest. It took a few bourbons to come up with the best idea he felt he had ever had.

“I’m listening.” Hayden could feel Ramses excitement and despite the urge to walk out on his old roommate again, he waited.

“The Falcone Games have gone on for many years and enjoy an inter galactic reputation as Gladiators, warriors of a sort, a return to the days of Roman coliseums when they fought for the glory of Rome.” Even as a child Ramses enjoyed gladiator movies. He counted himself lucky to have grown up as the games were being rediscovered, first by Hayden’s two predecessors and then finally Hayden himself.

“They are the best. Since the discovery of Creatine 170 the games have grown huge, and become an industry unto themselves. They were merely entertaining exercises before. But now....” Hayden counted himself lucky to be a part of the Creatine generation. Before Creatine he was just a prison warden but with Creatine he had become a world entrepreneur. His ‘brand’ had grown worldwide and even other worlds were beginning to emulate his style of ‘prison reform.’

“Building on an already ancient idea of having condemned men to fight to the death was a stroke of genius. Certainly not your discovery but you have certainly made the games synonymous with Hayden Pettigrew. Hayden, you are the games. Where you go and what you do sets the pace for everything else related to the games, law and order and prison reform.” Hayden swelled at the praise and appreciation of his work, but his ego was not to be stroked blindly. He realized all this stroking was leading to something and he wished Ramses would get to the point. And he said so.

“As I was saying, the games are wildly entertaining. The men are skilled and trained street fighters and perform to the will of the people. I’m suggesting you make the games more realistic. A few thousand years ago Roman gladiators fought to the death with shields and swords. The gladiators as they are now are a tame version of the originals. I’m proposing we take the gladiators back to their roots.” Ramses was excited about the idea and hoped Hayden would be excited as well. So much depended on it.

“And how...?” Hayden was beginning to wonder if he hadn’t been called here on a romantic wild goose chase.

“Now to the point. We have a huge surplus of steel. I have found a way for you to increase the popularity of the games, and make you a hero to the

public.” Hayden leaned forward, anxious to hear more. Despite the popularity of the games, it was no secret that its popularity was waning. It was a partial response to the outcry of a small but growing group of agitators who were dead set on decrying the inhumanity of the games. He would have loved to stick the agitators into the arena.

“Again I’m listening.”

“It’s already an accepted fact that the games are fought primarily by men either serving life or on death row. Fighting to the death simply hastened the process of their...termination.” Now I think you should bring in other criminals who are not on death row to fight for their freedom.

“To the death for those already condemned and possibility of freedom to the victors.” Hayden figured this might re-generate interest in the games’

“Yep but here’s the twist. I’m prepared to donate a shitload of steel to the games to fashion shields and swords. It’ll be the good old days back again.” Ramses triumphantly shook his hands into a fist. Hayden was not so enthusiastic.

“Are you insane? No one will stand for that.” Hayden personally allowed himself to get used to the idea but realized it would be a hard sell.

“If presented right we can sell anything. Disposing of the surplus steel, which we will sell will provide added income for the states.” Ramses himself figured to boost his own personal fortune as well as the state’s coffers.

“Taxes will fall, the extra money provided the participating states can implement key programs for the people such as food, health and education and it will satisfy the people’s quest for blood and justice at no cost to them.” Ramses had circled behind Hayden and rested his hands on the Warden’s shoulders. He whispered his passionate plans into Hayden’s ears.

“We will both be richer than Bill Gates ever was. Sure there will be a few malcontents but we can quiet them.” Ramses squeezed Hayden’s shoulder. It was involuntary but it felt good. It felt right. This wasn’t meant to be a romantic moment and both men fought the feeling. There were bigger things that needed their attention.

Hayden grabbed the Mayor's wrist and pulled him onto his lap. For a moment their eyes met and the years passed between them falling away as if it were only yesterday. They didn't speak, and they avoided the urge to give in to emotions long since repressed. Mayor Ramses got up from Hayden's lap and straightened out his jacket. Hayden spoke first, answering a question that hadn't been asked.

"You got married. You had a child." Hayden said.

"Does that matter?" was Ramses response.

"Maybe to your wife." Hayden turned his head and coughed. That topic was closed, for now. The past, and now present tensions between them could interfere with both of their plans were they to get side tracked. It was up to both of them to keep the plan on track. What Ramses was planning had to be big and it had to make command global attention. Nothing could be left to chance.

"A few malcontents? Forgive me Mr. Mayor but have you not seen the news? Have you not heard the rioting outside your own doors? The subversives are already up in arms!" In his mind Hayden was already devising a plan. He needed a plan that they could all get behind at least once a year. By the time the 'horrors' of this year were past the public would forget. They would forget until the next time. The public had a notoriously short memory but they would never forget being totally and completely entertained.

The Mayor had already been warned that wherever the games went there was always some sort of personal drama rumored to be concocted by the Warden himself to boost sales and interest in the games. There was often some sort of collateral damage left in its wake in the effort to restore peace. Ramses was determined that this was not to be the case this time. He intended to be very much a hands on Mayor for this installment of the games.

The grass roots movement protesting the existence of the games was gaining in support. Advocates for the abolition of the games, were beginning to disrupt the games as they appeared locally. Even simple advertising flyers were torn down and local chapters had bought advertising space on television to protest the carrying out of the games. In response,

Homeland Security was hot on the trail of “traitors to the union.” The latest action did not calm the Mayor’s apprehension .

Mayor Ramses’ family had created a dynasty that had been in control of New York for more than a decade. Silas Ramses had been the mayor of New York for three consecutive terms followed by his son Mercury Ramses who served for another three terms followed by Barnabas and then his son Bernard who was expected to hand the reins over to his son Tyger when his term was complete. This was Bernard’s third year as mayor.

Bernard loved his son, Tyger. The boy was a handsome one who spent much of his life pleasing his father. He was proud and very aware of the dynasty his family had built and he was anxious to take his place at the head of that family. There was so much he wanted to do once *he* was mayor. Things his father knew nothing of.

Charlotte Evergreen

The television cameras were focused on the very beautiful news interviewer, Charlotte Evergreen who was about to interview Stavros Constantin. His performance at New York City’s Metropolitan Opera House was being covered by the worldwide press. The assistant director made sure Charlotte’s microphone was ready to broadcast the anchor woman loud and clear.

“Good Evening, you’re watching VQBS television and I’m speaking with Stavros Constantin, one of the most celebrated singers of our time. His amazing cross-over from classical opera to mainstream pop, country and gospel has been nothing short of phenomenal. His voice range has challenged musical experts around the world.

Stavros’ rendering of *Nessun Dorma* even inspired a crazed fan to kidnap him in broad daylight at the Falcone Games over a year ago.

Stavros Constantin has never shied away from the difficulties of life on off the stage. Stavros Constantin is legendary in the role of the Modern Major-General. The marvelous technology involved in turning this tenor into a comic baritone was nothing short of technical genius coupled with the most extraordinary vocals ever recorded. Although an out and proud gay man himself he even managed to make his and the character’s sexual

ambiguity a part of the performance. He makes the “patter song” uniquely his own.

With *Di Quella Pira* in *Il Trovatore* Stavros turned in a performance that brought the house down when he performed it at Milan’s LaScala Opera House. Giuseppe Verdi wrote this aria with no regard as to whether the performing tenors could manage the powerfully dramatic singing and acting required in it. Performed today, he may have written it with Stavros Constantin in mind. This aria goes up to high C, but it may be the most immortal high C in opera, and the vocalist who performs it must hit the note perfectly. The length for which he holds it, and the rich timbre of his voice is what every opera fan lives to hear.

In *Mes amis, écoutez l’histoire* from *Le postillon de Lonjumeau*, Adolphe Adam wrote one of the highest tenor roles in opera. This aria hits a high D, one full step above high C, at the end. Many legends of Opera have had great difficulty managing it well. Others have hit the note, but couldn’t quite dwell on it as long as they’d like. Stavros Constantin became legendary at it.

Obviously I could go on and on about the genius of Mr Constantin’s legendary sound but recently he’s been in the news for something other than his music. And this time its personal. Recently, his impending marriage to Falcone Prison’s killer gladiator, Troy Akiru, was abruptly canceled, indefinitely. The relationship has certainly had its ups and downs in a Romeo and Juliet familiarity which has captured the imagination of the public. We have tried to contact Mr Constantin’s representatives for an update but so far they have not returned our calls. So, naturally we are especially honored to have Stavros Constantin himself in our studio, to comment on his very personal but public tragedy... Right after these messages.

The Games at Falcone

The beating was fierce and the sword play was devastating. The two gladiators Troy Akiru and challenger Asher Portman, were evenly matched and their skills were beyond formidable in the arena. Spectators were hungry for blood.

Asher possessed a great degree of skill and was being widely publicized as one of the newest yet most powerful gladiators in the arena. Warden Hayden Pettigrew took great interest in him as the possible replacement for Troy, had the libido-softening marriage of Troy and Stavros taken place. Which it had not, thanks to Hayden's interference. Hayden was the major coach for all the inmates who fought under the influence of Creatine 170, the powerful steroid that turned men into beasts. There were a handful of assistant coaches, but they were there for the *others*, the ones less promising than Asher or Troy. Those were the men that rarely saw more than one fight.

Asher's lucrative transition from Classic fighter to Champion Gladiator filled the prison coffers and gained the greedy attention of the Warden. Asher's powerful combination of ground and air tactics, mixed with comparable speed were fast surpassing ordinary expectation. His better than average tossing of opponents, and the single most powerful moves in the arena, made Asher a serious force to be reckoned with as the odds of his becoming the next champion grew higher in his favor.

Asher and Troy were primarily identical in their fighting style but Troy's recent emotional distraction had thrown his concentration off and the two warriors became less alike. Even though Troy began increasing the range of his strong and fierce punch attacks he appeared to consistently miss the mark of attack against his opponent. His mind was elsewhere as was his heart, when a sudden kick to his face reminded him of where he was. He tried to make up for the distraction by increasing the number of kicks and punches that he rained down on his rival. The assault slowed Asher down but it could never stop him.

Asher held his own and his combination karate and martial arts moves came at Troy again from all angles. Troy's recovery time had all but vanished and he was getting tired. He couldn't catch his breath and he became light headed.

As Troy went down on his face, Asher raised his foot and came down hard on Troy's back which exploded in a spray of blood. The match was over. Asher raised his fist as he circled his fallen opponent triumphantly. Troy was devastated and the Warden was furious.

The Interview

“Charlotte Evergreen here talking to Stavros Constantin. Welcome to VQBS Stavros, Your last performance was panned by the critics. They said your heart wasn’t in it and that the passion you usually display was notably absent. People are saying that the cancellation of your marriage to Troy Akiru has affected your performance. And as recently as last week Troy’s performance in the arena was his worst showing ever. In fact, he actually lost to Asher Portman, an up and coming rival. How do you respond to all of this?

Good Evening Charlotte thank you for having me. First let me just say that Troy and I are still very much good friends. We have a few things to work out but I’m sure the wedding will be rescheduled soon. We didn’t cancel the marriage we simply postponed it so those looking for it will find that there is no emotional drama here. As to my less than stellar performance (he laughs) as you have said, I *am* a legend, my performances *are* legendary so certainly I’m entitled to one off night. Sometimes not all the technical and other factors are up to my usual standards. There are many factors that go into making a perfect performance. People forget that we are just humans doing the best we can. Sometimes we perform better than the best and other times, perhaps not. That’s why we’re celebrities Charlotte. (Stavros gives a big toothy smile).

Well, I guess that answers the questions we are all asking. Has heartbreak over a romance gone wrong destroyed the careers of two of society’s most prominent performers? According to Stavros Constantin that is not the case. Representatives of Troy Akiru have refused our calls for comment. This is Charlotte Evergreen for VQBS. Meanwhile in a related story, Government officials are praising the arrest of the discovery of a subversive cell in the suburb of Ohio. The group is dedicated to bringing an end to the Falcone games claiming they are inhumane and un-constitutional. Their disruptive tactics have gone from distributing flyers to civil unrest. Recently a bomb went off at the local qualifying games. Luckily no one was hurt.

Troy threw his shoe at the image of Charlotte Evergreen. It went right through her as the image continued to project. The Warden watched on, disgusted by Charlotte and Troy. All he could think of was that one shouldn’t shoot the messenger. Lucky for everyone guns were taken out of existence two hundred years prior.

“I hope you are fucking happy. We lost a lot of money on you tonight Akiru. You know you are going to be severely punished for letting this emotional shit get the better of you. Yet here you are watching this Evergreen bitch commenting on the state of your *nuptials*. Frankly you know how I feel. I think you should of gotten over Stavros long ago when you thought he was dead.” Hayden was furious. He hated losing in general, but he hated losing money even more. The breakup between Stavros and Troy had been orchestrated by him and Stavros' own management. Yet he felt there was still an emotional tie between Troy and Stavros.

“Come to my office, boy. I’m going to try and fuck that singer out of your head once and for all. Be warned, it’s gonna hurt! I got combination moves of my own. It’ll be my big dick against a police taser against your sweet ass. Now move!” Hayden slapped Troy’s butt hard with the baton. Troy got up and headed toward the Warden’s office. He knew what was in store but he knew he had brought it on himself.

Spread-eagled across the table Troy’s naked body shivered and sweated. He mentally braced himself for the anticipated pain that Hayden had long cultivated to use against him. Troy continued to sweat profusely because it took him a while to come down from any match. His dick had never been harder in reluctant anticipation of Hayden’s punishment. Years of abuse had weakened Troy’s resolve exactly as Hayden had manipulated it. His control would have been ultimate had it not been for Stavros.

Hayden slapped the baton against the palm of his hand. “You made us both look bad out there tonight Akiru. You know the punishment for that...” Hayden hung his jacket on the hook and reached into his desk drawer for the keys to the cabinet. In the cabinet were the toys that Hayden would use to rain hell upon Troy Akiru.

Charlotte

“Good Evening, You are here with Charlotte Evergreen, at the Coliseum of the Falcone Prison where in two weeks time Falcone will present a startling new approach to the games and how they are played. The new strategy will be revealed here tonight. Meanwhile agitators are up in arms over the reputed new changes approved by the Mayor himself concerning how the games are to be conducted. I have in the studio with me

tonight, the honorable Mayor Bernard Ramses.” The camera expanded to show the handsome mayor smiling broadly.

“Good Evening Mr. Mayor. I understand that New York City is to be the first to introduce the new changes to the Falcone Colosseum Games. I understand that for the past few months the changes have been shrouded in mystery. Can you tell us now what they are?” Charlotte smiled as she presented the microphone to the Mayor which he reached for eagerly. His son Tyger had accompanied him to the podium. He had been kept in the dark as well and eagerly awaited his father’s response.

“As we all know the Gladiators and the games themselves are a big part of the history of our world. The administrators of the Falcone prison are very proud to have re-introduced this highly sophisticated although controversial form of entertainment which has benefitted everyone involved each in its own special way” The mayor had become quite adept at placing viewers on the edge of their seats. He was a master showman.

“An exciting new approach has allowed us to reduce taxes, add more monies to benefit the homeless, educate our children and greatly reduce the population of our prisons!” The mayor could barely contain his excitement. From the inception of his plan his team had worked tirelessly night and day, to iron out any kinks in the system. Programs in New York had already been put into action so that those who would protest the new plans would have a hard time protesting against mouths that were already being fed, or people already being housed.

“Charlotte, those programs I just mentioned are already in place and many locations have already opened their doors to better benefit all New Yorkers, especially those with lower incomes. New York City as always been on the historic cutting edge when it comes to programs this huge.” The more he talked the more convinced the Mayor was that he was about to go down in New York history as its most visionary leader.

Charlotte raised an eyebrow. Contrary to the Mayor’s boasting, New York had not been on the cutting edge of anything for a great many years. At best it had barely maintained the status quo, mainly by cutting the funding to everything that mattered to people in a failing economy.

The Mayor had gotten Charlotte to the Coliseum on the promise of a big breaking story. Her heels were killing her and she wished he would get to the meat of his announcement and/or story sooner rather than later. Viewers around the world, not just locally, were waiting in anticipation. They didn't have to wait long.

"It's no secret that the country has been functioning under a huge metal surplus. Mainly steel. In cooperation with the country's penal system and the prison authorities we have found a way to put that surplus to use. We have employed a small army of artisans and blacksmiths who have been working tirelessly to create what I'm about to show you." Mayor Ramses took a deep breath and led Charlotte over to a platform where a narrow box stood unsupported, propped up against a simple chair.

Without further fanfare the Mayor walked over to the box and opened it. Inside were mounted a shield and sword. The sword handle was copper and steel and the crest on the shield was a stylized 'F'. It was a detailed duplicate of an ancient Roman gladiator's sword and shield down to the smallest details.

Charlotte gasped, unable to hide her horrific reaction. No explanation was necessary, the implication was obvious. There was a moment that passed between the smiling Mayor and the stunned interviewer. Charlotte recovered and rushed to fill in the gap.

"Wow. Impressive. Moving along we also have in the studio today Stavros Constantin who will be the prime entertainment for these most impressive new games, which of course have yet to be finalized. Tell me Stavros how do you feel about the Mayor's proposed new approach to the games?"

Stavros was not used to questions outside of those relating to him only.

"Uh..I think the new weaponry is very attractive. I'm sure the gladiators involved will..uh... enjoy and make the most use of them in an entertaining way." He smiled broadly at a nearly paralyzed Charlotte. She turned immediately to her other guest Asher Portman. The new proposed weaponry had come as a surprise to him as well. Asher was in prison for killing several men with his bare hands during an armed robbery and was serving a life sentence. To go out this way was suddenly noble and

appealing and every gladiator movie he had ever seen justified this new turn in the legacy. He would go out a hero and not just as a convicted murderer.

Warden Hayden Pettigrew, and Mayor Bernard Ramses had kept everyone in the dark about these changes. They wanted everyone's response to be genuine for the press, including those of the gladiators themselves. They held their breath and waited.

"Asher, you look as surprised as I am. Did you know about this not so novel approach to an old game? This re-introduction of actual weapons takes us back a few thousand years. Is Falcone bringing murderous brutality back into our times?" Charlotte turned away from Asher giving him no time to respond to her inquiry.

"It's no secret that the Romans were a cruel society that claimed thousands of innocent lives. How do you feel about participating in resurrecting that dark part of our world's history?" Charlotte turned back toward Asher and prayed for an intelligent response. She was aware that this was a breaking story and she wanted to get as candid a first response as possible from one so directly involved.

Asher Portman had been under the influence of Creatine 170 for many years and only recently had found himself poised for greatness. Now he was being groomed to replace the *emotionally damaged* Troy Akiru, and that meant enjoying all the perks of a first class warrior. The freedoms were small but important to an inmate serving a life sentence. One of those perks involved appearances at promotional tours and gatherings and appearing on news shows such as this one. On one of those tours Asher had met Stavros Constantin shortly after the breakup with Troy went public. A friendship started between them as lust at first sight. They had managed to keep their relationship secret. Even under Hayden's watchful eye they were able to steal moments of intense sexuality. Stavros was missing Troy and Asher was missing any kind of relationship outside of the prison. Asher was not prepared to buck the system. Especially now that it was giving him so much.

"I believe that the current Falcone administration is benefitting people whom the games have never touched before. The proceeds from the games are feeding and housing people who never cared about the games before and felt marginalized by society. This way not only can we introduce new

people to the games but they can begin to pay taxes and benefit from it as well, making them useful to society.” Asher was eager to move on. What he said and what he felt were entirely different.

Charlotte couldn’t believe her ears but it was certainly good television, as would be the games themselves. Televised mass murder was sure to be a good ratings grabber.

Stavros and Asher

“I don’t care about that. All I care about is....” Stavros adjusted his cock back into his pants. He was just pulling them on having had them down around his ankles. Asher and Stavros never missed a chance to *entertain* each other. The smell of raw barebacked sex clung to them.

“...is Stavros...I’m sorry I know you meant to say Troy.” Asher had no illusions. Stavros loved himself first and then Troy, in his own way. He knew Stavros was just using him to make Troy jealous, but he appreciated having Stavros on his side which came in handy for clearing him to go on these publicity junkets only mildly supervised.

“We both know we’re only pretending to date to make him jealous. Don’t pretend you don’t know that. The sex is just my way of showing my appreciation. I am very happy with your...uh...our performance.” Stavros ignored Asher, he was convinced that Troy was only being difficult. He was playing chicken to see who would cave in emotionally first. Stavros was not going to go crawling back to Troy. True, it had been Stavros who had erred and betrayed Troy but Troy had to know it meant nothing. What was a little indiscretion among two men who truly loved each other. Even though the betrayal had been one of the heart, Stavros was looking forward to his wedding being a huge ratings grabber. Troy wouldn’t walk away from that. Hayden wouldn’t let him.

“Of course. Word in the yard is that *he* dropped *you*, and he doesn’t want you back.” Asher really couldn’t have given a rat’s ass about the relationship between the two homos. Asher was a bi-sexual who actually cared more for women and he didn’t care much for Stavros. He thought of him as a spoiled, arrogant little pissant whom god had wrongfully gifted with a voice. As for Troy, Asher wanted everything Troy had, and if that included the little singer then so be it. There were always going to be perks

that went with being linked to a worldwide celebrity. It was easy enough for him to pretend to like the man when there was so much personal freedom at stake. Besides that, Asher was the consummate top and Stavros was a dedicated bottom boy. The sex was extremely enthusiastic, but that was in part because each man was mentally with someone else, somewhere else.

“He will. Once he sees me with you he’ll go nuts. The Creatine in his system still fuels his aggression. He’ll be unreasonable, emotional and uncontrollable but underneath all that, his heart still burns for me. He’ll be a terror in the arena. Hayden would certainly think twice before replacing him with the likes of you. You’re a powerhouse but you aren’t Troy. Don’t say I told you but Troy and Hayden’s relationship has always been *special*.” Stavros remembered the last time he’d seen the way Troy had looked at them the first time Troy had seen Asher and Stavros together. He had seen the hurt but he’d also seen the anger in his man’s eyes. He didn’t ever want to see that again especially if it was directed at him. Stavros decided it was better that Asher should take the brunt of that anger.

Asher would never forget what he had just been told. No, he was not Troy, he was better and he couldn’t wait to prove it.

“I don’t want him turning his wrath toward me.” Asher joked. He had no fear of Troy. He and Troy were evenly matched. Even fueled by insane jealousy Troy will have met his match. Asher laughed. The sooner this farce came to an end the better. He thought it especially ironic that the big match was going to occur on Valentine’s Day. He planned to deliver a special Valentine of his own.

“I’m telling you Asher, there’s no telling what he’ll do. You have bested him in the arena before, and you probably have nothing to fear. Of course these new rules change things. It’s now a life or death battle and even I know the implications of that. Last I heard Troy doesn’t want to die.” Stavros had not been sure what the implications of the new rules would be. He didn’t pay much attention to details unless they involved him personally or his music. He wasn’t sure that he was worth dying for but he had to believe Troy would think that Stavros was worth living for.

“I do love my time with you Stavros. You’ve become more than a piece of ass to me. I hope that after the big event you’ll let me date you, for real.” Asher figured there was no reason *not* to milk this relationship.

“Don’t get ahead of yourself. It’s not going to happen.” Stavros laughed. He liked Asher but not enough to even consider dating him seriously.

“Don’t you have some feeling for me at all?” Asher asked, certain he already knew the answer. He just wanted to be certain.

“Sorry Asher, I love Troy. He’s all I want. I can’t explain it but....never mind. Just do your part will you?” Asher smiled. He heard exactly what he expected to hear. it would make this all so much easier.

Hayden and Troy

“You don’t have a choice in the matter. You haven’t in a long while or haven’t you noticed?” Hayden delighted in unveiling the new agenda for the games. There had been rumors but not confirmed till now. Troy had been shocked then adamant about not participating. None of the gladiators had any formal training in swordplay. It would be a bloodbath.

“You never miss a day where you don’t tell me I’m a friggin con, or a cum-sucking inmate, Hayden. Certainly if I die you’ll have to give up that daily sadistic pleasure.” Troy accepted that he was never going to see freedom again. He had given up the fight for his life and was prepared to die by lethal injection. The civil rights groups protested as they’d been doing for the last couple of hundred years against capital punishment. He took the stay of execution in his stride. In actuality he could not have cared less. When the Falcone games began, the civil rights groups protested again, citing man’s inhumanity to man. Troy had merely accepted it. One thing he knew from history was that man’s inhumanity was inevitable. If it wasn’t lethal injection, then it would be the games, after the games it would be something else. He didn’t fear death, he just got tired of it mocking him. Even if the games were successfully stopped there would be something else to take its place and bottom rung lifers like him would always be on the bottom rung.

“You killed that guy not me. You got lucky Troy. Creatine 170 is you...” Lucky bastard thought Hayden. Before Creatine he would have gladly seen Troy get lethal injection or hung from a fucking tree till he got a raging hard on or shit in his pants it didn’t matter much to Hayden. One killer in the world less. Then Creatine came along followed by the *Games*.

Before Falcone Hayden had spent much of his life training street fighters and boxers in the legitimate ring. He was legend at his game; creating champions was his undisputed talent. That is where the authorities had recruited him. They made him warden of his own unit, retrained him to be a bad ass and gave him shitloads of money to create a field where none existed. Prison authorities paid Hayden big to add 'gladiator' to the field of athletics. Shoved down the throats of the public, the recipe was simple. Money, guts and glory and the champions were picked from the prison system, it made heroes of men who would ordinarily have been executed. The public loves to forgive, and forgive they did. Ticket sales soared. Everyone got rich except the gladiators.

Then came the Asian killer Troy Akiru, and stirred up something inside of him. Hayden couldn't put his finger on it right away, all he knew was that 'it' made his dick hard. Till then sex had been a simple act, until Troy came along. He routinely beat Troy into unconsciousness several times a week, day and night. Sometimes Troy lay nearly comatose on the floor of Hayden's office. Blood would be caked around his nose or torn lip and his bruises would be awash in Hayden's piss mingled with blood and sometimes even cum as Troy drifted in and out of consciousness.

But Hayden would be certain that Troy was out cold before he would cradle and caress Troy in his arms and kiss his mouth until Troy's blood-tinged saliva would dribble between both their lips. Hayden often punished him, beat him, and caused him unimaginable pain. And now the system was going to try and kill him.

"Whose idea was this anyway? Whose idea was it to put my life further at risk...?" Troy had been prepared to die many times, or at best live out his life desolate and alone on death row. That was before the Creatine experiments changed his life dramatically. Hayden had been one of those changes. It was a reluctant acceptance of how things were. He hadn't been prepared to become the object of Hayden's twisted affections.

"Everyone's life babe. Everyone's life is at risk. Times are changing'. The public needs and wants more and more to be entertained. In short the public wants blood. And of course what the public wants..." Hayden had given it a lot of thought and decided that he had no intention of risking

Troy's life. He didn't want to risk losing any of his top men, but if he had to, it was certain not to be Troy.

"There's money getting made here and not just from the games anymore." Hayden couldn't resist the lure of easy money or playing with the big boys. Aligning his fortune with the New York Ramses could only do him good in the future. He could imagine himself as a heavy player who brokered in steel even if it meant brokering in human flesh first.

"The steel industry is going grateful to be grateful to us." Now that Stavros was out of Troy's life he had wanted to spend more time on Troy's 'training and grooming.' It was unfortunate that Stavros' appearance was practically a tradition with the big games. Stavros had become so identified with the games that in the public's mind he had become its unofficial symbol. The romance between Troy and Stavros had been the icing on the cake. The polls currently showed that the public was not buying their recent separation. Stavros on Asher's arm might convince them. Unfortunately Troy would have to be dead first. Hayden realized that sometime sacrifices had to be made. For better or for worse.

Tyger Ramses

"This is bullshit. I feel I need to apologize for my father. Believe me I didn't know this was part of his plan." Tyger was on his cell phone to his lover, childhood actor Hunter Mason. Hunter was head of the West Coast chapter of PAG People Against the Games. Hunter was packing to join his long time companion Tyger Ramses in New York City. He was going to supply the moral support Tyger needed to go against his father concerning the controversial changes to the games. This latest bombshell had caught everyone off guard and had upped the ante. Lives were about to be sacrificed in the name of entertainment.

"I can't believe that my dad wants to build our personal fortune on the corpses of the innocent dead. Ok, Ok maybe not so innocent but you've always agreed with me that a life is valuable no matter what the person chooses to do with it right? Good. Apparently this plan has been in the making for a long time. They were deliberately planning for the games to take place on Valentine's day."

“Well of course, the newspapers will tie it into everything that’s romantic and blood red. This is the kind of thing that will sell papers. Even Stavros Constantin is rumored to announce his engagement to Asher Portman at the games. Oh yes I’ve met him. Good-looking and talented but talk about your egos. Meanwhile My dad and the Warden, Hayden Pettigrew plan to milk this for all its worth.”

Tyger lit a cigarette then hurriedly put it out. He had promised Hunter that when the new year started he was going to quit the habit because it was a smelly one. Besides it made him look and feel like a douche. No one named Tyger Ramses, heir to a great steel fortune should ever look like a douche.

“Our New York chapter was planning on something like a love in or hacking into the computers to wreck or somehow screw up the planning or something but no one is close enough inside the organization to give us a heads up on exactly *how* to screw things up. Kidnapping Troy or Asher would simply put a wrench into plans but they’re already under police surveillance....(he laughs) yeah, well duh. Kinda sad to admit that was my contribution to things.”

Tyger stood at the window of his hotel suite which looked out directly onto a billboard showing full body, barely concealed, full frontal giant poster shots of Asher and Troy in loin-clothed full Gladiator mode. They were hot and sweaty and angry looking men. “Damn,” Tyger thought. Hunter was his boyfriend but Hunter was no Gladiator, bless his heart. Tyger pulled back the curtain for an unobstructed view of those gladiators. Damn it would be a helluva loss if either one of them died in the arena. He had to think of something.

“Talk to them?! Talk to who, Hunter? And about what? I wouldn’t know what to say and to whom to say it. The only ones I know with any clout are the very people we are plotting against. I can’t even claim ignorance without looking like a fool or a liar. Everyone knows how very close me and my dad are. No one is going to believe I didn’t know about this. Or maybe they’ll even think I had a hand in the whole thing myself.”

Talking to his Dad would be an exercise in futility. The one thing Bernard Ramses loved more than his son was money. If the games were going to start using steel weaponry there was going to be a worldwide

demand for authentic weaponry and the Gladiator games of one thousand years ago would reappear as if by magic. It would happen that fast. He was ashamed to admit that it would be his family that would bring wholesale death and destruction back to a world that had finally eradicated it. So it seemed on the surface. Whatever the subversives planned he had to take care that his father would not be hurt.

“For fuck’s sake how the hell did he even manage to keep the mass producing of shields and swords a secret? Hell I’m his son and I never left his fucking side. Seems the lesser prisoners worked separately from the gladiators. That’s how no one knew what the other was doing. Under threat of death the laborers kept silent. Fuck, the Warden apparently runs a tight fucking ship. Seems the term *punishable by death* is a phrase he takes seriously.”

“Oh I’m going to be close to the whole thing. I’m in the Governor’s box. Front row center. I’ll see the blood before its even spilled. I’ll be right next to my dad. The Governor and the Mayor will be sucking up to Stavros Constantin mainly for the photo opportunities and the chance to touch his firm celebrity butt. Our star attractions will be where else, but in the arena.”

The doorbell rang at Hunter’s place on the West Coast. He opened it to admit Charlotte Evergreen who was in town for the day before jetting back to New York in time for the games.

“Well I think we can expect a blood bath. With only a few days before the first of the series, no one has had much time to get acquainted with the new equipment let alone how to use it or even formulate a strategy. Believe me, I’ll bet the fighters were as surprised as we were. If anyone of them had been appraised of the situation they would have had to let it slip, if only to save their own skins. So what do we do? Hey, who else is there with you? Charlotte? Say hi to her for me. What? We have a handle on the problem? Really? You think if we offered him money? More money? Is that it? Then we can make it happen. You are so smart my darling man.

Tyger breathed a sigh of relief. Hunter had just delivered him some good news. It was true some men would sacrifice anything for some easy cash. Leave it to Charlotte to get the scoop for herself.

“Huh? What? Are you serious? Hmmm there’s a thought. I could give it a shot, I guess. Baby when are you going to get here? I’m lonely, scared and horny as hell. Being around all these hot guys isn’t making me feel any less anxious. Besides you’ve got to be here for Valentine’s Day! Are you? Really? That would be great. Ok, you get ready I can’t wait to see you. I’ll get the ball rolling here. It’s the one thing I can do, and do it right. Of course it’ll work. As an activist from the 20th century once said “by any means necessary.” I think this qualifies. Good night my darling.”

Tyger disconnected himself from his cell phone and for a moment stared at the fading image of his boyfriend. Valentine’s Day wasn’t too long off and this one promised to be a Valentine that no one would forget. He pulled out the pack and lit one of the cigarettes. It was a celebration. He would later wash his hands very carefully.

Valentine’s Day

In the last one hundred years the office of the Mayor had been expanded to include ever broadening powers, such as declaring Valentine’s day as a citywide holiday. Mayor Ramses didn’t want anyone who wanted to attend the games not be able to be there. Celebrities, and world renowned hi-profilers were flying in from all over the world to see *The Falcone Death matches* as they were now being called. There was plenty of speculation that it would be the first and last of its kind in one thousand years. Many thought they would never have the chance to see such a spectacle again.

Every criminal in the local penal system was expected to be a part of the games where everyone was expected to crawl, or be carried out of the arena. If the New York games were successful the other prisons around the world would be sure to follow. The main attraction would be the grudge match between Troy Akiru and Asher Portman, to the death. No one spoke of it officially but everyone knew that whoever walked away from the match alive would also get the guy, in this case Stavros Constantin. The games appealed to romantics as well as the blood and guts elements of the public.

The balcony that overlooked the arena was catered by the finest restaurants in the city, who were falling all over themselves to cater the event of the year if not the decade. Only major VIP’s had tickets to the balcony. The VIP men were decked out in their finest designer suits and the

women jostled for position in front of the cameras to show off their designer gowns and priceless jewelry.

Extra security guards armed with tasers were there to protect the guests, the jewelry, and foreign government heads. On display in the lobby, leading to the main arena, were the shields and swords to be used that night. Helicopters patrolled the skies. Even those not interested in the games couldn't help but be caught up in the hype.

"This is Charlotte Evergreen and I'm wearing Gianni Vasgaber the Italian designer who is also here tonight at the Falcone Coliseum along with everyone who is anyone. Every financial and political family dynasty is represented here along with major celebrities from the world of art, music, film, television and theatre. New York hasn't seen a night like this in a very long time. The Falcone Coliseum is the place to be tonight. Lives will be lost and heroes will be born. I, Charlotte Evergreen will be here to record every detail of every happening."

Just then a loud roar in the background could be heard. As in the coliseum of 500 BC the arena had become full of exotic animals on parade, endangered and otherwise. The crowd oohed and aahed as the animals were released into the arena. They had been collected from around the world from zoos and private collectors.

"In the original coliseum the animals were collected and slaughtered along with the hapless humans caged with them. Tonight animal rights activists have sworn to bring the ship down if one hair is harmed on any of these protected species. Unfortunately the humans present here have no such representation. Or do they? I'm talking here to Hunter Mason, former child star and now the West Coast representative for PAG, People Against the Games." Charlotte thrust the microphone into Hunter's face. He grabbed at it, eager to be heard.

"Hello, Charlotte. I have to tell you, I am flabbergasted. I have never seen such a spectacle in my entire life. Animals are being mistreated, people about to be torn limb from limb and they call this '*games*?' This is a human tragedy on the scale of Nazi resurrection and should not be allowed to go on! Tonight's show should not only be halted but this system dismantled forever. This is what happens when a wrong idea is allowed to go on instead of being corrected at the outset. We just pile new shit on top of old shit. It's

become a juggernaut. Only something terribly drastic could stop this and even then it may be too late. This is a tragedy of apocalyptic proportions!” Hunter waved his fists at the camera as he was being pushed aside by Charlotte. She did not want him to overplay his hand too soon.

“After we come back from these political messages, we will take you onto the balcony where city VIP’s are gathered. Along with the opening festivities the city will hand out its most prestigious award to one of its own.” The camera panned the outside of the ship, sweeping over the masses of people on the ground.

Troy flexed his muscles as the crew combed his hair and oiled his body up for the cameras. He had been speechless when he heard that he was to receive the key to the city as well as the New York Citizen of the World Medallion. The awards had come out of nowhere. Hayden had assured him that he had earned these honors and what better time to receive them than at the first *death match games*. And who better to present them than his onetime boyfriend, Stavros Constantin.

The entire event was being televised. They stepped onto the podium from opposite sides. Confronted for the first time since the very public breakup, Stavros and Troy looked at one another. No words passed between them. Via satellite, the world was witnessing the looks that passed between the two men and it collectively swooned along with every romantic who had ever lived. They were attestants to the most romantic reunion ever publicly broadcast.

Mayor Ramses’ toothy smile couldn’t have been more genuine. He couldn’t have been happier. The roar of the crowd that greeted his parade of animals had been a success. Through the prison bars around the arena cameras presented close-ups of the terrified faces, as the inmates contemplated their fate. These games, new and improved, would be a sensation and the rest of the world would follow. The Ramses family fortune would go through the roof.

“How did you get Troy to go along with this awards presentation?” Mayor Ramses was proud of the idea that he and his son Tyger had collaborated on this together. The awards presentation was an excuse to get Troy and Stavros together. It provided an opportunity for the public to see their favorite star-crossed lovers together one more time before the

wedding, whether it actually took place or not. The outcome of the games was not certain. There was still a chance that Troy could die in the arena. It was Tyger's idea to also put the impressive Asher Portman in full Gladiator regalia which included the sword and shield, on the same podium next to the lovers to remind people of the drama of *the triangle*. Hayden assured the Mayor that the guards had tasers at the ready should they need them.

"It wasn't difficult Mr. Mayor. I just reminded him that he works for the state and if he ever wanted to see Stavros again, it would be best that he co-operate. Under the circumstances a show of compassion and humanity could possibly go a long way." A long way toward promoting the games is what concerned Hayden as he smiled and nodded at the cameras though clenched teeth. There was more drama on the way. He was handed a plaque which consisted of a twelve inch shield flanked by silver eight inch swords on each side and a commendation on a rolled parchment. The crowd quieted slightly. Hayden stepped onto the podium.

"There is so much I could say about the honor and integrity that I have come to associate with Gladiator Troy Akiru, but we are eager to get on with the games. So it is with great honor as your trainer and friend to present you with this medallion of honor and the key to the City of New York." The crowd roared its approval and the band swelled. Clumsily Hayden fumbled and the medallion fell from his hand and onto the ground before Troy's feet. He appeared to be reaching for the parchment but what he did was pull one of the swords off of the plaque and sliced through Troy's Achilles tendon. Shouting as he attacked. "Do you think that after all these years of love and care I would let you risk your *life* in the arena?! No, I will not!" The others looked on in shock as Warden Hayden sliced through Troy's other tendon. Cutting Troy's tendons had rendered him too injured to participate in the games anytime soon. The Mayor was outraged but had even less time to react before he himself was attacked.

"What the fuck...!" Troy shouted in pain as he collapsed onto the podium. At the same moment Asher raised his sword and swung it toward those gathered close to him. His intended target was the Mayor, and Stavros who had watched the drama unfold gasped in horror as the blade sliced through the Mayor's throat. Stavros mistakenly thought Troy was Asher's intended victim as the crippled warrior stumbled to the ground. Stavros threw himself onto the path of the steel blade as it tore a gash through his

own throat. Stavros' blood splattered over Troy. The cameras caught all the chaos as all hell broke loose!

Meanwhile a crippled Troy held Stavros in his arms.

"What the fuck was that all about?" Stavros gasped. The gash in his neck was a significant one. He could barely hear himself speak for all the yelling and screaming as security rushed to protect the others near the podium.

"You grabbing the spotlight again." Troy applied pressure on the wound. He could see the prison medics making it through the crowd.

"I have a feeling those days are numbered now. My throat's been slit. That's bound to fuck up some high C's." Stavros lifted his head and looked around him. Asher had been brought down by the taser-toting guards. The Mayor was either dead or unconscious. Tyger Ramses was holding his father in his arms but he seemed more anxious than upset. Stavros lay his head back down.

"Oh, you ready to become a housewife now?" Troy's eyes filled with tears. He couldn't lose Stavros again. Not now. Not ever. Stavros saw the tears in his gladiator's eyes.

"Oh c'mon man, you aren't going to get rid of me this easy. I suspect an investigation is going to keep us both in the public eye at least for a little while longer. And then there's the wedding." Stavros coughed up blood as the medics loaded him onto a stretcher. Troy held his hand as long as he could before they hurried him away.

"Hey. Happy Valentine's Day, my future husband." Troy shouted as the medics tended to his wounds.

"Next year just a card, you crazy Asian, Just a card." Stavros called back, but his voice was lost in the din that surrounded him.

END

Lydian Press

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cain Berlinger has published innumerable short stories in various gay publications throughout Europe and America. His self published books include essays on Black America, a book on meditation, and a series of fitness books (as RD Cain)

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Tales of sexual obsession taken to extremity. Explore the depth and breadth of gay BDSM with the master of edgy erotica, Cain Berlinger. Dark, shocking, wild and often painfully human, these stories will take you to the limits, and beyond. This collection of short fiction pushes boundaries in every way and is not suitable for the fainthearted.

CORPORATE GAMES

Boardroom antics, back room sexcapades, harassment, and murder; these are just some of the Corporate Games.

Corporate Games are fraught with danger. Six short tales of power, money, sex, and love.

Who wouldn't want to punch an arrogant boss? What looks like a chance to even the score leaves Caesar vulnerable. Working overtime gets Nick closer to his sexy boss and gives him a chance to live out his erotic fantasies. Power corrupts, but will the shares put into the hands of a paid lover prove too much for the Wheelers? Hunter makes an immediate impact on Lance in both the boardroom and the bedroom. Zev learns to use his natural advantage to climb from lowly beginnings to the very top of the movie business. Can Mark Channing secure a unanimous vote for his plan, or will the decision be taken out of his hands?

EXHIBITIONISTS & VOYEURS

Are YOU ready for your mystery date?

In the world of exhibitionists and voyeurs there are the men who love to be seen and the men who love to be watched. Obsession leads Cory,

Paget and Louis discover that department store dressing rooms are under surveillance usually by equally horny security men who love watching the action from the safety of anonymity. When you don't know the guy you can't possibly get into trouble, can you? Even boss Brent gets in on the action that he sees on the screen. Jeff, Evan and Parker know the safest sex is from across the street however, when the obsessor comes face to face with his prey, it isn't always fun sex but something darker and more sinister. Some men hide in shadows out of safety other come out of the shadows because they don't want to feel, anything. Evan thinks he's seen a murder, or has he? Welcome to the world of the voyeur and the men who love them. Are you ready for your mystery date? Better let your friends know first.

FREAKS

Sometimes bad boys are just freaks.

The men in this collection of stories from Cain Berlinger have an unusual take on the world of sex and pleasure.

HARD AT WORK

A Cain Berlinger Collection

Making a buck isn't the only thing that's hard around these working class 'stiffs'.

Hard working men, working hard or just 'workin' it'. Whether in the corporate board room, from street thug to bodyguard, artist to artisan, these men know what they want, and how to get it.

LUTHER

Vampire Luther, and Max, Son of Satan, battle bloody demons, zombies and other dark Creatures of the Night.

Luther is a blood thirsty Vampire, who frequently terrorizes gay haunts. Max is a rock star with a mixed band (half supernatural, half human) who happens to be the Son of Satan. The two men become

roommates, with Max trying to 'humanize' Luther. Meanwhile, the world comes under attack from angry demons, zombies, and other vampires. The boys have to battle one after another to keep the status quo. Some of their adventures are over the top... but always entertaining.

SUMMERLANDS

Summerlands, where good men go to be bad!

Ever wonder what happens after you die? Where do you go? Whom might you meet? The hero of our tale has crossed over after an especially bad gay bashing. Arriving in Summerland where everything is green and clean and the many men gathered about 'The Tree' are beautiful he learns that not much has changed in the passionate and sexual realm of things. The men all hail from different places in time and history. They are more than willing to share and demonstrate the sexual lives they all lived before tragedy struck. There's a pirate, a prince, a Chinese warrior, a civil war soldier a Vietnam vet and many more from the dawn of time to now.

What's so bad about dying when the men you meet are still so full of life?

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